SERIES V

GLIMPSES OF KASHMIRI CULTURE

General Edito.

Professor K. N. Dhar.

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From the Editor's anvil :

Culture has been defined as the sum-total of a nation's aesthetic and intellectual achievements. It can safely be termed as the gradual evolution of man's reaction towards his environs. His psyche has all along tried to attune itself to the ever-changing pattern and tempo of intellectual and social atmosphere; his inexhaustible fund of emotions, latent or active, derives sustenance from what is around him. After going through the mill of assimilation or abjuration, these emotions earn a full-baked name as values. This mental drill cannot find any convenient perch to cool its heels upon since it is a non-stop mental process. It starts with evaluating the actual and culminates with fashioning the ideal. It is being and becoming at the same time. It is appetizing at the initial stages and self-satisfying towards the end.

It is, however, a misnomer to say that this quest for locating the soul does end anywhere; ideal like beauty places emphasis on personal rather than on general thinking. So ideal defies exact and fool proof explanation. It can at best be termed to contain myriad hues of a rain-bow and each individual in accordance with his inherent aptitude and taste draws upon anyone af these. This kind of thankless flirtation at the commencement of this innings leads him on to the ultimate source—the white colour; blotless and chaste in its pristine glory which had multiplied this innate unity. This realization dawns upon him when stumps are drawn for the day. As soon as he negotiates this truth, his blinding perception is transformed into the transparency of an X-Ray. Hence culture is

the reflector as well as the reflection of a nation's nerve in terms of its intellectual and aesthetic attainments. It is, to speak squarely, the acme of self-awareness a nation has appropriated at a particular phase of life. That is precisely what culture stands for.

In the foregoing pages we have, as usual, tried to highlight such attainments of Kashmiris in the various fields of literature, philosophy, history and other allied subjects. It may fairly be called the 'ethos of Kashmiri people' condensed here with its virgin fragrance. It has been a humble effort to correlate and co-ordinate the multi- dimensional intellectual prowess of our fore-fathers, for which our learned contributors have obliged us immesely. It is moreover, what these literatteurs owed to the present in terms of the past Culture does not grow out of a vacuum. It has its roots in the hoary past when man awoke to the need of putting two and two together. These 'glimpses' into the days gone by through our chinks of comprehasion and understanding will prove an inspiring back - drop to our present generation for grooming its tools to make life more rewarding and purposeful.

In editing this volume V of the 'Glimpses' I have been, most un-grudgingly, helped by my Research Officer Shri Jankinath Kaul 'Kamal' in correcting the proofs and also seeing the whole compilation through the Press. Shri O. N. Bazaz has over-whelmed me by typing out the whole script with utmost dedication. Last but not the least, Shri Dangroo, our secretary has spared no pains in making my task all the more easy by his seasoned advice and experience.

I am sure that our understanding readers will find a viable food for thought in these pages and will also steal some time to send us their comments on the over-all impression this compilation may have made on them. For this kind gesture, pleasure would be entirely ours.

Jyeshta-Ashtami,
The 30th May 1982,
Srinagar (Kashmir).

K. N. D.

" Kashmir Tantrism "

*Justice Shiva Nath Katju**

TANTRA SHASTRA is one of the most misunderstood subjects not only in India but throughout the world. In popular thought and imagination a Tantrik is a person who dabbles in strange, awful and mysterious rites involving visits to cremation grounds and use of wine and women. He is feared also because he is credited with powers of inflicting harm as also of bringing relief and good fortune. The so-called Tantriks run a flourishing business catering to the needs of politicians, men in trade and industries and in other walks of life. Very often most of such Tantriks, after acquiring some powers by elementary Tantrik practices, use them for petty monetary gains. For a time they show good results but they are side-tracked from the path of spiritual advancement and have to content themselves by giving magic shows and demonstrations of cheap miracles. As a matter of fact, an earnest Tantrik practitioner avoids being caught in the mesh of *sidhis* and keeps his eyes fixed on his spiritual objective very often preferring anonymity.

Tantra Shastra is part of the Dharma Shastra of the Hindus and has its roots in the Vedas. Western scholars in their anxiety to put the age of Hindu Civilization later to the Greek Civilization have attempted to put the age of Rig Veda to 2000 B. C. and this too seemingly has been done reluctantly and out of generosity. The tragedy is that Indian scholars who take their inspirations from their western teachers and masters have toed the Western line of thought. If Rig Veda goes back only to 2000 B. C. then the period of Shri Ramachandra and of Mahabharta have all to be squeezed in between 2000 B. C. and the birth of Gautam Buddha. A more glaring instance of the western myth is the Aryan invasion of India. Every text book

* *25, Edmonstone Road, Allahabad.*

of history starts with that myth which has no basis. It is assumed as a geometrical maxim that Aryans were not Indians and they entered into India from some country other than India. The question then arises as to where did they come from. Then the hunt begins and we are confronted with different theories about the original home of the Aryans and here the wise and pompous scholars are not agreed at all. We have the Central Asian, Caucasian & Lithunian theories regarding the original home of the Aryans. Even such a profound scholar like the late Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was so overwhelmed by the weight of western opinion that he too propounded his Arctic theory on the basis of the long drawn twilights indicated by some Rig Vedic *Richas* on *'Ushas'* and said that the Arctic Region was the original homeland of the Aryans. It has to be categorically stated that the Indian tradtion as also the Vedic literature clearly supports the view that the homeland of the Aryans was Sapta Sindhava *viz.* the land covered by the River Sindhu (Indus) and its tributaries.

It is now admitted that in some remote past the land south of the present Punjab and Haryana and the north of the Vindhyas was covered by sea. The Rajputana desert has the Sambhar lake which has salty water indicative of its marine past. It is now well recognised that the Himalyan mountain ranges are, from a geological angle, of camparatively recent origin and marine fossils have been found in its rock stratas. History is silent as to when did that happen. Sahara and Gobi deserts were in times past cradles of human civilisation and as a result of intensive grazing the soil became barren and ultimately turned into deserts wiping off the old civilisation of which no traces are left. Again, due to geological changes land between Europe and Africa which connected the two continents got submerged under water when the Atlantic ocean broke through the strait of Gibraltar. we know nothing of these dead and past ancient civilisations.

The Red Indians of North America use Swastika as a symbol. The surprising fact is that they also pronounce it as Swastika as we do. It is said that the American Red Indians are descendants of Asian Tribes who entered America through the Behring strait in some remote

past. History is silent as to when that happened. Our known recorded history hardly covers three to four thousand years.

We go further three thousand years back for our sketchy information about Ancient Egypt. The Egyptian pyramids still remain a mystery. Results of archaeological excavations in Sumer Akkad and Mohenjodaro have thrown some light, though dim, on the history of those regions. Beyond 4000 and 5000 B. C. is the era of darkness which is sought to be penetrated by the valiant efforts of anthropologists, archaeologists and geologists, and we hear of such phases in human history as stone age and copper age. It is now said that human beings first appeared on our planet five million years back. How they evolved is still a controversial subject. Some say that we evolved from a type of sea-fish which had a verbetra like ours. Another widely believed theory is that apes were our ancestors. McGlashan, one of the renowned psychologists of the world, in his recently published book, "The savage and beautiful country", which deals with the working of human mind, has suggested that just as we are now sending human beings in outer space similarly by a reverse process the human species on our planet came from some planet of our galaxy. Madame Blavatsky, the founder of theosophical movement has propounded the same view.

In short we are so dazzled by the scientific and technological advancement made during the last three or four centuries that we faithfully believe that ours is the most progressive era of our world history and the human beings who inhabited our planet six or seven thousand years back were savages and primitive men. Our self-conceit makes us unable to realise that we are totally ignorant about the past beyond the aforesaid limits. McGlashan says :-

"A time will come once more when the whirling machinery will grind to a halt, the harsh music cease, and the roundabout riders step down stiffly from their apocalyptic beasts. Looking round for his friends of the inner world, every man will see them, too, in troops of gray shadows, slipping silently away. One by one the lights of the fair ground will go out, and every man will be left at last, as at the shadowed close of so many earlier civilisations, to find his own way home, by himself, in the dark".

So civilisations have grown and blossomed and then faded away on our planet. We hear now of continental drifts; shifting of land masses breaking old continents and forming new ones. No one knows the history of the people who lived on land that has now been submerged under seas. Time has devoured them all. In this respect the Hindus are unique. Their memories, thoughts and traditions go back to the dawn of creatian itself and the time when man first appeared on this planet. The Rishis heard the Vedas with the appearance of human beings on our Earth. Today the Hindus are not those people whose history may be sought to be built up on inferences drawn from ancient ruins and relics of the past. With all the ups and downs that the Hindus have faced in the then history they have gone on marching in tune with KALA, the devourer of all, still chanting the primeval songs that were passed on by the Rishis from generation to generation. The Hindu does not begin from any popularly known starting point of era such as B. C., A.D., Vikram or Shaka. He calculates his day from the beginning of creation itself viz. the start of Brahma's day. The universe which we call ***Srishti*** begins and lasts till the close of a Brahma's day and there is ***Pralaya*** at night. The creation restarts from the dawn of the next Brahma's day. After hundred such days of Brahma there is the Great Dissolution - Mahapralaya. After its end srishti starts again and so the cycle goes on and on.

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।
रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥

"Those yogis know the essence of time who are aware of the fact that Brahma's day extends to a thousand Mahayugas and similar is the extent of one night of Brahma's day."

—Geeta VIII-17

The four Yugas viz Satyauga, Treta, Dwapar and Kaliyuga make one Mahayuga. This concept is not any hidden or secret doctrine. on the other hand, every Hindu who performs the daily Sandhya recites the following ***Sankalpa*** at the start of his worship :-

वैवस्वते मन्वन्तरे जम्बुद्वीपे भरतखण्डे आर्यावर्तैकदेशान्तर्गते पुण्यक्षेत्रे कलियुगे कलिप्रथमचरणे अमुक संवत्सरे अमुक मासे अमुक पक्षे अमुक तिथौ अमुक वासरे अमुक गोत्रोत्पन्नोऽमुक नाम..........

Today, the first half of the second Prahar of Brahma's Day in Vaivaswat Manvantar and Shvetvarah Kalpa in the land of Aryas in the holy Bharat-Khand of Jambudweep, and the first *charan* of Kaliyuga, in so and so Samvatsar, Month, Paksha, Tithe, Day, I of such and such Gotra and name........"

One day of Brahma is equal to a Kalpa and 14 Manwantars make one Kalpa.

Kali	—	1×432000 human years
Dwapar		2×432000 ,, ,,
Treta		3×432000 ,, ,,
Satya		4×432000 ,, ,,
Total		Total $43\frac{1}{5}$ lakhs of years = one Mahayuga.

One day of Brahma or 1 Kalpa is $100 \times 43\frac{1}{5}$ = 432 crores of human years.

One Manwantar is equal to $\frac{432000000}{14}$ human years = 30.858 crores.

We are at present in the seventh Manwantar Vaivaswat after the elapse of 27 Mahayugas and in the beginning of 28th Kaliyuga of the presently running Brahma's Day. The current Kali year is 5081.

Manus change in every Manwantar and they have particular names. The manu of the presently running manwantar is Vaivaswat and the manwantar is named after him. Since one Kalpa is one day of Brahma's life there are thirty Kalpas in every month of his life which have separate names.

The late Shrimad Upendra Mohan, the great scholar, sage and savant of Bengal has said in his remarkable book "Reason, science and shastras" :—

"The same Yugas, the same Manus, the same Kalpas, the same Brahma constantly return through time eternal, therefore the calculation of the creation, of its age, its life and its destruction is constant and correct to the minutest fraction of the time, unlike stupid modern science which does not know what it talks and flounders on from statement to statement through a quagmire of ridiculous falsehoods. Now which is right? The changeless shastras or the ever changing science..........."

The Hindus know according to the calculation of the shastras that the present age of the earth is 198 crores of years. This calculation is changeless and unchangeable—it is God's spoken word and therefore the truth which is

समानं त्रिषुकालेषु सर्वावस्थासु शाश्वतम् ।
सनातनं मतं सत्यं चीयते नापचीयते ॥

[That which remains the same at all times—the past, the present and the future, that whieh is permanent and unchangeable under all conditions, that which is eternal is a called truth. It admits no ebb nor flow]

In the sombre and awe - inspiring dance of time the origin and flow of Tantra Shastra and Shiva Shakti upasana has to be seen. It must be stated at the outset that "Tantricism in Kashmir" is not any separate system which is distinct from the general frame-work of Shakta Agams. On the contrary, it is a part of it. Kashmiri savants and sages however made important and lasting contribu.ions in interpreting the Agam Shastra and more so in expounding the world famous Shaiva Darshan (Shaiva Philosophy). According to our Shastras the Vedas are revealed to the Rishis in every Satya Yugas and they are gradually withdrawn in the succeeding yugas and very little of them is left in Kaliyuga. There are 21 branches of Rigveda, 109 of Yajurveda,

50 of Atharva veda and 1000 of Sam veda.* Only 2 of the 1000 branches of Sam Veda are now extant in this world and the rest have been withdrawn. Rig Veda, Atharva Veda and Yajur Voda have similarly been depleted. It is not possible for men of Kaliyuga either to perform the long-drawn vedic yagnas or derive benefit from it. So Mahadeva in His infinite mercy revealed the Tantras for the men and women of our age. But the principles of Tantrik worship, particularly of Shiva-Shakti worship, were known to a section of spiritual practitioners even in the Yugas preceding Kaliyuga and they ran parallel to the vedic sadhana system. Tantric rites are क्रियात्मक and have to be practised. Having their roots in the Vedic system they are comparatively short and easier to perform than the Vedic Yugnas and they are highly potent and give quick results and raise man to godhood. Even in Satyauga, Treta and Dwapar the Tantric practitioners were frowned upon by those who followed the orthodox form of Vedic rituals. These differences gave rise to the cool relations between Dakhsa Prajapati and Mahadeva. At that time the daughter of Daksha was the Divine consort of Mahadeva. Shrimad Bhagwat (3rd. Skandh, 4th. Adhyaya) refers to the strained relations between Mahadeva and Daksha Prajapati. Their relations had been so embittered that when Daksha Prajapati decided to perform a big Yagna he did not invite either Mahadeva or the latter's consort. The episode is described in enchanting language in Puranas and by poets.

Mahadeva and Sati, as she was called in view of what happened later, were sitting on Mount Kailasa, when Sati observed the Devas goiug with their retinues in Akash (sky). She enquired from Shiva as to what was happening. Mahadeva said the Devas were going to her father's house to join the yagna there. She was pained to hear of the yagna of which she had not been informed. She asked as to why Mahadeva was not participating in the yagna. Mahadeva said that her father was annoyed with him and they had not been invited. She insisted on going to her father's house inspite

* C. F. "Mahavakya Ratnavali"—Page 2. Ed.

of the fact that she had not been asked to come by her own father. Mahadeva tried to persuade her not to go saying that even a daughter should not go to her father's house when she had not been so asked. Sati persisted and when Lord Mahadeva was not inclined to accede to her wish to go uninvited to her father's house She projected Her dazzling form as Mahamaya in all directions, 4 in four directions on surfaee, 4 upwards in four directions, one above and ane below, ten in all Her aspects of Kali, Bagla, Chinnamasta, Bhuvaneshwari, Matangi, Kamala Dhumavati, Tripursundari, Tara and Bhairavi. They are the Ten Mahavidyas and the Tantrik worship of Shiva-Shakti in its upper reaches revolves on them or any of their other aspects. In fact they are the different entrance gates around the base of the mountain on which a Tantrik practioner starts on his climb to the summit where the Mahavidyas all merge into one and he worships at the alter of the Creatrix of all who keeps on creating, preserving and dissolving the Universe. She has three forms (रुप) viz Para Rupa (परारुप) which no one knows, Mantra Rupa (मन्त्ररुप) which is Her subtle form, and lastly, Her physical (स्थूलरुप) which are described in Her strotras in Tantra Shastras and Puranas.

She is very graphically described in "Durga Saptashati" (दुर्गा सप्तशती by Rishi Medhas (ऋषि मेधस). Commonly called the "Chandi Path" its recitation is believed to be very effective and the Hindus all over India and also in other countries recite it individually as also collectively. All its Mantras are Siddha Mantras. It is the story of Emperor Surath (सुरथ) and Samadhi Vaishya (समाधि वैश्य) which cuts the barriers of Time and Space. Both of them were in distress and seek the refuge of Medhas Rishi. It describes Surath as :—

स्वारोचिषेऽन्तरे पूर्वं चैत्रवंश समुद्भवः ।
सुरथो नाम राजाऽभूत् समस्ते क्षितिमण्डले ।

In swaroch manvantar (the second Manvantar in the cycle) born in Chaitra vansh was Emperor Surath who ruled on Earth. Having been defeated by his enemies he entered a dense forest and came to the ashram of Medhasa Rishi. While the Emperor was in the Rishi's ashram Samadhi Vaishya, who was a prosperous merchant but was in adverse circumstances, also came in the Ashram. They

related to each other their tales of woe and misfortune and eventually met the Rishi and put questions to the Rishi and asked the cause of their acute mental distress. The Rishi spoke of Devi Bhagwati who is the cause of all ;

ज्ञानिनामपि चेतांसि देवी भगवती हि सा ।
बलादाकृष्य मोहाय महामाया प्रयच्छति ॥
तया विसृज्यते विश्वं जगदेतच्चराचरम् ।
सैषा प्रसन्ना वरदा नृणां भवति मुक्तये ॥
[I-50-51]

She, the Mahamaya, forcibly puts the minds of even the wise into hazen. She creates the Jagat and when she is pleased She grants liberation to men.

"Astonished, Emperor Surath asked who is that Devi whom you call Mahamaya How did she come into Being, what is Her sphere of working, what is Her form and character. I want to hear all about Her.

The Rishi replied :—

नित्यैव सा जगन्मूर्तिस्तया सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
तथापि तत्समुत्पत्तिर्बहुधा श्रूयतां मम ॥
I - 57

"Even though She is ever present, personifies in Herself the entire Jagat, is the cause of all, She manifests Herself in different forms and now that you have come to me—so listen".

The Rishi spoke of the appearance at the time of 'Deluge' when Brahma sitting on a lotus, which had its roots in the navel of Vishnu who was asleep, saw himself being furiously attacked by Asura Madhu and Kaitabha. He prayed to the Devi to save him. The famous ode of Brahma begins thus :—

"विश्वेश्वरीं जगद्धात्रीं स्थितिसंहार कारिणीम्"
निद्रां भगवतीं विष्णोरतुलांतेजसः प्रभु ॥

He prayed the Devi to free Vishu from Her mesh of sleep. The Devi thereupon released Vishnu from sleep and the latter fought against the two Asuras and killed them. Here the Devi did not fight Herself but acted through Vishnu.

The second chapter of the Saptashati refers to the powerful Asuras led by Mahishasura who had subdued the Devas and had himself became Indra. The Devas led by Brahama approached Shiva and Vishnu for protection. Plight of the Devas greatly infuriated Shiva and Vishnu and their anger caused effulgence (तेज) to burst out from their faces and similarly the Teja of the Devas also appeared and the entire effulgence uniting produced the form of a Dazzling Lady whose radiance spread to the *three lokas* (त्रिलोकी)

अतुल तत्र तत्तेजः सर्वदेवशरीरजम् ।
एकस्थं तदभून्नारी व्याप्तलोकत्रयं त्विषा ॥
[II-13]

The Devi fought several Asuras of the legions of Mahishasura and killed them. Finally Mahishasura came in person to fight the Devi and after initial encounters assumed the form of Mahisha (महिष) and attacked the Devi. The Devi became furious and refreshed Herself by superfine drink—wine ;

"ततः क्रुद्धा जगन्माता चण्डिका पानमुत्तमम्"

and said—

गर्ज गर्ज क्षणं मूढ मधु यावत् पिबाम्यहम् ।

"Shout, shout, boastfully you fool ! till I take madhu (wine).
III-38

उत्तमं पानं (Superfine drink) and मधु (wine) has relevance to the use of wine by Tantrik practitioners on special occasions. After a grim fight with Mahishasura the latter was slain by the Devi ;

तया महासिना देव्या शिरश्छित्वा निपातितः
III-42

"The Devi by Her great sword cut off the head of Mahishasura.

Delighted to see Her victorious, the Devas prayed to Her as Sura Devi ;

तुष्टुवस्तां सुरादेवीं सहदिव्यैर्महर्षिभिः

III-44

The hymn in praise of the Devi by the Devas is soul stirring. It pleased the Devi who was in the form of Bhadra Kali and She granted the Devas prayer to came to their help whenever they were in trouble,

The last Act in the Drama starts with another deadly combat between the Devas and the Asuras when two mighty Asuras—Shumbha and Nishumbha overpowered Indra as also Surya, Chandra, Yama and Varuna. They again prayed to the Devi to save them. This is another famous hymn in Dnrga Saptashate. While the Devas were praying to Her she passed by in the form of maiden—Parvati—and asked the Devas as to whom they were praying. As soon as she put that question there emerged Shiva (शिवा) from Her own body and said that the Devas are praying to *Us* ;

शरीरकोशतश्चास्याः समुद्भूताब्रवीच्छिवा ।

[V-85]

Having come out of the body of the Devi She is known and venerated in the universe as Kaushiki ;

शरीरकोशाद्यत्तास्याः पार्वत्या निस्तृाम्बिका ।
कौशिकीति समस्तेषु ततो लोकेषु गीयते ॥

[V-87]

As a result of Kaushiki's separation from Her body the complexion of Parvati underwent a change and became dark and stayed in the Himalyas and became known as Kali ;

तस्यां विनिर्गतायांतु कृष्णाऽभून्सापि पार्वती ।
कालिकेति समाख्याता हिमालयकृताश्रया ॥

[V-88]

Apart from the fact that Durga Saptashati occupies a very important place in Tantrik worship I have referred to it at some length because the aforesaid change in the complexion of Parvati and Her being called Kali appears to have a direct bearing on Kashmir Tantricism and the form of our Ragnya Bhawani. A notice board in the courtyard of Kheer Bhawani Kund in Tulmula says, so far as I recollect, that the Devi was worshipped by Ravana in Lanka and was brought from there and installed in Tulmula after the defeat ef Ravana by Shri Ram Chandraji. In the shrine in the Kheer Bhawani Kund Devi Ragnya Bhagwati is sitting on the left of Her Bhairava, Bhuteshwara, and Her complexion is dark. Kali is Krishna-Varna (कृष्णवर्णा) and has dark complexion. But as mentioned in the dhyan (ध्यान) of Ragnya Bhawani Her complexion is very fair,like fresh snow ;

राज्ञीं भजेहम् तुहिनाद्रिरुपाम् ।

Has the change, as seen in Her image in the Tulmula Shrine and the description in Her dhyan, any bearing on the aforesaid narrative in the Saptashati which transformed the Parvati into dark complexioned Kali ? I met the famous sage and scholar, Swami Lakshman Joo Maharaj in the summer of 1979 when I was in Kashmir. I pointedly referred to the aforesaid description of Ragnya's complexion in Her Dhyan and Her complexion in Her image in the Kheer Bhawani Shrine and asked him whether Ragnya Bhawani is Kali and if I remember rightly he said it is so. The point is interesting and requires clarification. It is generally believed that Ragnya Bhawani is Tripura Sundari. But if She is Kali also then She combines in Herself the aspects of two Mahavidyas.

I resume the narrative of the Devi's encounter with Shumbha and Nishumbha which again has an important bearing on the form of our Sharika Devi.

Parvati of dazzling beauty was seen by (चण्ड मुण्ड) Chand and Mund and they reported to their Master Shumbha that a maiden of unrivalled beauty was residing in the Himalyas and she was fit to be his queen and he should have her;

स्त्रीरत्नमेषा कल्याणी त्वया कस्मान्नगृह्यते ।
[V - 100]

Shumbha thereupon sent a messanger to Parvati who spoke to her about the prowess of his master and asked her on his behalf either to marry Shumbha or his brother Nishumbha. Parvati said that she was aware that Shumbha and Nishumbha were masters of the three regions- Trilok (त्रिलोक) bnt while in a fitful mood, she had taken a view that she will marry only that person who breaks her pride in combat and proves that he is more powerful than herself;

यो मां जयति सग्रामे यो मे दर्पंव्यपोहति,
यो मे प्रतिबलो लोके स मे भर्त्ता भविष्यति ॥
[V — 120]

The messanger was astounded to hear the Devi's reply. How could a maiden like her think of defeating the powerful Shumbha and his legions in fight. He ccnveyed the Devi's reply to his master. Shumbha was enraged on hearing the Devi's reply and asked his general Dhumralochan to go to the Devi with his legion and bring her to him by force. When he attacked the Devi the latter burnt him by her powerful hissing;

हुङ्कारेणैव तं भस्म सा चकाराम्बिका ततः
[VI—13]

Her lion destroyed the asuras who had come with Dhumralochan. Then Shumbha sent the two demons Chanda and Munda to fight with her and bring her back to him by force. The two demons were well armed and had a big force with them. Seeing the forc? arrayed against her the Devi was enraged and Kali emerged from her forehead (ललाट),

भ्रकुटीकुटिलात्तस्या ललाटफलकाद्द्रुतम् ।
काली करालवदना विनिष्क्रान्तासि पाशिनी ॥
[VII — 6]

Kali fought furiously and killed Chanda and Munda and what remained of their troops ran away. The Shumbha decided to go himsəlf with Nishumbha wit h his legions and fight the Devi who had Kali by her side. Seeing the huge force of Shumbha the Devas could not remain aloof but this time the Shaktis of Brahma, Shiva, Kartikeya,

Vishnu and Indra emerging out of them joined Parvati and Kali in the fight against Shumbha. The fight raged furiously and the Devis decimated the forces of Shumbha. The fight against Shumbha's general Raktabeeja was deadly. Whenever blood flowed from his body, thousands of other Demons appeared. Parvati asked Kali to open her mouth wide and drink the blood flowing from Raktabeeja's body. Kali was addressed by Parvati as Chamunda and acting accordingly she drank the blood flowing out of Raktabeeja's body until he was slain dead by Parvati. Nishumbha resumed fighting and he was also killed. After the death of his brother and his generals, Shumbha himself confronted the Devi and said—

बलावलेपदुष्टे ? त्वं मा दुर्गे ! गर्वमावह ।
अन्यामां बलमाश्रित्य युध्यसे यातिमानिनी ॥
[X — 3]

"O Durga ! do not boast of your strength because fighting with the support of Devi Shaktis has swollen your pride"

The Devi replied ;—

एकैवाहं जगत्यत्र द्वितीयां का ममापरा ।
पश्यंता दुष्ट मय्येव विशन्त्यो मद्विभूतयः ॥
ततः समस्तास्ता देव्यो ब्रह्माणी प्रमुखालयम् ।
[X — 5 - 6]

Thou wicked person ! who else besides me is there in this Universe (Jagat) ? I am one ; see all these aspects of Mine re-enter in Me. On saying this all the Deva - Shaktis including Brahmani merged into Her" and Ambika stood alone;

तस्या देव्यास्तनौ जग्मुरेकैवासीत्तदाम्बिका ॥
[X — 6]

The fight between the Devi and Shumbha was bitter and lasted for long and ultimately Shumbha was slain by the Devi. The Devas prayer to her is another stirring hymn in her praise. As mentioned earlier every Shloka in Durga Saptashati is clothed in highly esoteric

language and describes the constant struggle which goes on in the astral plane between the forces of virtue and evil which the Shastras refer to as the fight between the Devas and Asuras—Devasurasangrama. It is reflected in our world as also in mankind inhabiting it.

The tnteresting question arises, particularly with reference to Shakti worship in Kashmir, whether the Devi referred to above who annihilated Shumbha and Nishumbha and their legions is represented in any of her aspects still existing in Kashmir and worshipped by the Kashmiris. Can it be our Sharika Bhawani !

The Deva - Shaktis, which came by her side when Shumbha himself came with his forces to fight her, were :

आयाता ब्रह्मण : शक्तिर्ब्रह्माणीं साभिधीयते,
माहेश्वरी वृषारूढ़ा त्रिशूलवरधारिणी
कौमारीशक्तिहस्ता च मयूरवरवाहना
तथैव वैष्णवी शक्तिर्गरुडोपरि संस्थिता
यज्ञवाराहमतुलं रूपं या बिभृतो हरे :
शक्ति : साप्याययौ तत्र वाराहीं बिभ्रती तनुम् ।।
नारसिंही नृसिंहस्य बिभ्रती सदृशं वपु :
वज्रहस्ता तथैवैन्द्री गजराजोपरि स्थिता ।

[VIII 15—21]

Brahmani, Maheshwari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Narsingh, and Indrani emerging out of the Devas came by her side. Tho remarkable coincidence is that in the Yantra Puja of Sharika Bhagwati all the aforesaid Devis are worshipped as Matrikas ;

"ततोऽष्टदलेषु मूलेन पुष्पाञ्जलिं दत्वा अष्ट मातृका : पूजयते ।
यथा – स्वागदलमारभ्य वामावर्तेन पूजनम्
ईं ब्राह्मी श्री० । ईं वैष्णावी श्री० ईं चण्डिका श्री० । ईं अपराजिता श्री० ईं कौमारी श्री ० ईं शाम्भवी ० । ईं वाराही श्री० ईं नारसिंही श्री० "★

*Devi Rahasya P. 417 (Kashmir Research Department Publication

#Devi Rahasya-P. 44

The names of some of the aforesaid matrikas appear in the Avaran Puja (अवारण पूजा) of the Yantras of Ragnya, Jwala and Bala also but not in such remarkable sequence as mentioned above.

Another remarkable coincidence appears from the following lines in the Sharika Stotra :—

हुंकार मात्रेण सर्वैरिवर्ग
हत्वा भवेद्भूपति सार्वभौम:

As mentioned above Dhumralochan, the general of Shumbha was reduced to ashes by the hissing of the Devi—

हुङ्कारेणैव तं भस्म सा चकाराम्बिका तत:

In Sharika Bhagwati's dhyan (ध्यान) she is shown as sitting on lion and in blood red garments with her Bhairava Vamadeva (वामदेव) by her said :—

बालार्क कोटिसदृशीमिन्दुचूडां कराम्बुजै: ।
वरचक्रभयासीश्च धारयन्तीम् हसन्मुखीम्
सिंहारूढां रक्तवस्त्रां रक्ताभरण भूषिताम्
वामदेवाङ्कनिलयां हृत्पद्मे शारिका भजे ॥

In another dhyan of Sharika Bhawani she is shown as having eighteen arms. Do they symbolise the aspects of Kali with 10 arms and Lakshmi and Saraswati having 4 arms each, of uniting in Her. Is She the Durga of Durga Saptashati who fought against Shumbha and Nishumbha? The question has to be answered by the Savants of Kashmir.

The principal Kula Devis of the Kashmiri Brahmins are Ragnya, Sharika, Jwala, and Bala Tripur Sundari. The Shrines of both Sharika and Jwala do not contain any *Murtis* but are rocks (Shilas) and are not manmade. They go back to hoary past. Thus it can be inferred that the Devi was worshipped in her aspects of Ragnya, Sharika and Jwala and others since time immemorial and before the epic war of Mahabharata and the dawn of Kaliyuga. The worship of the Devi existed in the Vedic Times and prior to Kaliyuga as

would appear from the vedic Devi Sukta (देवी सूक्त) and any number of references in Puranas and Itihas apart from what is said in the Durga Saptashati and it so existed in Kashmir as in other parts of the country. Thus the Devi was generally worshipped as the creatrix of the universe from the very dawn of human civilisation side by side with the vedic rites which were performed by the people. The hidden Sadhana of the Devi was also known to some elite practitiones before the advent of the Kali era.

The Mahabharata was fought towards the close of Dwapar Yuga. In the conversation between Yudhistera and Sanjaya before the start of the war the time mentioned was the prevailing Dwapar Yuga.
(Bhisma Parva, Chap. X)

Calculating from the present Kaliyuga year 5081. Kaliyuga began in 3101 B.C. which is a crucial and turning point in human history on our planet.

"It is said that Kaliyuga could not begin as long as Lord Shri Krishna was touching this Earth with His holy feet and it was only after He left this mundane world that Kaliyuga commenccd. [Kaliyuga Raja Vrittantam, Bhagwat III Chap. III]"∞

According to the tradition, It'has and Puranic literature of the Hindus the Mahabharata War took place in about 3136 B. C. viz about 36 years before the commencement of Kaliyuga.

The Mahabharat is full of references to Shiva and Devi. When the rival forces were arrayed on the battlefield and before the Start of fighting Lord Krishna asked Arjuna to pray to Durga for victory :

शुचिर्भूत्वामहाबाहो संग्रामाभिमुखे स्थिता ।
पराजयाय शत्रूणा दुर्गास्त्रोत्रमुदीरय ॥

and then Arjuna prayed to Dnrga in a soul-stirring hymns the opening of which is :—

चण्डि चण्डे नमस्तुभ्यं वारणीवरवर्णिनी ⑧

∞ "Age of the Mahabharata War" By Prof. Nadimpabli Jagannadh Rao Pantulu.
⑧ Mahabharata—Bhi hma Parva—Chap. 23

In this hymn the Devi is addressed in all names which occur in the Durga Saptashate and in the Puranas-

Similarly there are any number of references to Shiva and Several Odes and hymns in which He is addressed in hundreds of names along with His Divine consort—the Devi in Her various aspects. Veda Vyas himself describes the glory and attributes of Shiva.* He is also described as Pashupate and His worship in the form of Shivalinga is mentioned by Ved Vyas. Similarly in the Sauptik Parva of Mahabharata there is the Stuti of Shankara by Ashwatthoma (Chap. 7) and the description of the Mahima of Shiva-Parvati and Shankara (Chap. 17). There is also the Sahsranama of Shiva in Chap. 284. The Anushasana Parva of Mahabharata again describes the Mahima of Shiva. The Meghavahan Parva is again full of the description of Shiva and His Stotra (Chapters 14 to 18.)

It is clear that during the time of Shri Krishna the worship of Shiva and Devi was well known and was performed by the Hindus all over the country including Kashmir. Vitasta is mentioned as one of the Rivers of Bharat Khanda and Kashmir as one of its regions in the Bhishma Parva of Mahabharata (Chap. 9). Bhishma Pitamaha while lying on his bed of arrows after the close of the Mahabharata War told Yudhishthira about the then existing forms of Dharma in Bharat Khanda. He described them thus :—

सांख्य योगः पांचरात्रं वेदा पाशुपतं तथा ।
ज्ञानान्येतानि राजर्षे विद्धि नानामतानि वै ॥
[e. g. Sankhya, Yoga Panchratra, Veda and Pashupat.]

The destruction and loss of life in the Mahabharata War was collosal. The weapons used were more lethal than what may appear from the use of bows and arrows. There is specific mention of Several Weapons such as Brahmastra and others which were highly destructive and very likely some kind of arrows with unclear heads were used. A large number of tribes from behind the frontiers of United India took part in the fighting. Drona Parva of Mahabharata

* Mahabharata—Drona Parva—Chap. 202

specifically mentions the "Shaved headed" Kamboj soldiers, the Yavanas, Shak, Shabar (शबर), Kirat and 'Barbar tribes who took part in the fighting (Ch. 19.) The influx of people from abroad caused a great social confusion in the country. And then also began the Kali era. The vedic rites became difficult and beyond the capacity of men. There is another incident on the record. Janmejaya orgauised a great yagna for avenging the killing of his father Parikshit, the grandson of Arjuna, by Takshak Nag नाग The yagna started and snakes from all regions were drawn and started falling in the burning sacrificial pits. Then a Rishi, the protector of the Nagas appeared and stopped the rites. The interruption infuriated Agni Deva and he gave a curse to the Brahmins saying that hence onwards the Vedic Mantras would be ineffective to them like a poisonless snake. Then began the age of the Tantras.

The Mahanirvau Tantra महानिर्वाण तन्त्र is one of the Agamas which are ranked with the shrutis. Agamas are in the form of a dialogue between Shiva and Parvati. The latter questions and Shiva replies. In Nigamas निगम Shiva questions and Parvati answers. In other Tantras such as Damaras डामर and Yamalas यामल only Shiva speaks, there being no conversation between Him and Parvati. There are several Upa-Tantras उपतन्त्र and commentaries on the *Mul Tantras* by Rishis and savants.

The Mahanirvana Tantra has a dramatic opening. Parvati says :

(प्रथम उल्लास) आयाते पापिनिकलौ सर्वधर्मविलोपिनि ।
दुराचारे दुष्प्रपञ्चे दुष्टकर्मप्रवतके ॥३७॥
न वेदा: प्रभवस्तत्रस्मृतीनां मस्मरणं कुतः ।
नानेतिहासयुक्तानां नाना नाम प्रदर्शिनाम् ॥३८॥
बहुलानांपुराणानां विनाशो भविता विभो ।
तदा लोका: भविष्यन्ति धर्मकर्मबहिर्मु खा: ॥३९॥
उच्छृङ्खला: मदोन्मत्ता: पापकर्मरता: सदा ।
कामुका: लोलुपा: क्रूरा: निष्ठुरा: दुर्मु खा: शठा: ॥४०॥

स्वल्पायुमन्दमतयः रोगशोकसमाकुलाः ।
निःश्रीकाः निर्बला नीचाः नीचाचारपरायणाः ॥४१॥
नीचसंसर्गनिरताः परवित्तापहारकाः ।
परनिन्दापरद्रोहपरिवादपराः खलाः ॥४२॥
परस्त्रीहरणेपापशंकाभयविवर्जिताः ।
निर्धनाः मलिनाः दीनाः दरिद्राश्चिररोगिणः ॥४३॥
विप्राः शूद्रसमाचाराः सन्ध्यावन्दनवर्जिता ।
अयाज्ययाजकालुब्धाः दुर्वृत्ताः पापकारिणः ॥४४॥
असत्यभाषिणोमूर्खाः दाम्भिकाः दुष्प्रपञ्चकाः ।
कन्याविक्रयिणो व्रात्यास्तपोवृतपराङ्मुखाः ॥४५॥
नैवपानादि नियमो भक्ष्याभक्ष्य विवेचनम् ।
धर्मशास्त्रे सदानिन्दा साधुद्रोहीं निरन्तरम् ॥४६॥
स्तोत्रपाठं यन्त्रलिपिं पुरश्चार्यं जगत्पते ।
युगधर्मप्रभावेण स्वभावेन कलौ नराः ॥६८॥
भविष्यन्त्यतिदुर्वृत्ताः सर्वथा पापकारिणः ।
तेषामुपायं दीनेश ! कृपया कथय प्रभो ॥६९॥

[द्वितायोल्लास]   सदाशिव उवाच ।

धन्यासि सुकृतज्ञासि हितासि कलिजन्मनाम् ।
यद्यदुक्तं त्वया भद्रे ! सत्यं सत्यं यथार्थतः ॥३॥

The Devi said: "At present Kaliyuga holds Sway and causes the destruction of Dharma and prompts people to commit wicked deeds, immoral and false acts. Now influence of Vedas has gone, Smrites have also been drowned in forgetfulness and the names of various Puranas which are full of history and point to various paths will not remain known and consequently the people will turn against virtuons acts. The people of Kali will become rudderless, vain, full of Sin, Voluptuous, greedy, cruel without feelings of pity and will become haughty and accustomed to using unkind words. The people of Kaliyuga will keep company of low persons, will try to acquire the wealth of others, speak ill of others, act viscously and will become wicked. In trying to forcefully get another's wife these people will have no fear of sin. These persons will always remain poor, dirty and diseased. The Brahmins will not perform the daily Sandhya and

will act like Shudras. Prompted by greed they will try to earn their living by performing forbidden acts and commit sins. They will be liars wicked persons vain, have evil tendancies and sell their daughters and will be opposed to tapas and vrat. They will flout the rubes with regard to eating and drinking and will always denounce the Shastras and virtuous men. O ! Lord of Jagat, who among these people under the Kaliyuga will read stotras and understand yantras and perform Purashacharans. Men of Kaliyuga will be of very, evil tendencies and will be sinful persons. How will they be reduced ?" Sadashiva replied :—"Devi, you are blessed, merciful and kind and you are the well wisher of people of Kaliynga. Whatever you have said about me is true".

Then Sadashiva revealed the forms of worship which leads to liberation from bondage.

Tantra shastra has a wide connotation and it covers the Pancha-deva upasana which came into vogue after the Mahabharata war with the start of Kaliynga. The Pancha-devas are Ganesh, Vishnu, Surya. Shiva and Devi and there are separate sets of Agamas for each of them. Thus there are Ganpatya, Vaishnava, Saura, Shaiva and Shakta Agamas. In popular parlance Tantriks are supposed to be those who are worshippers of Shakti (Devi). Shakti is never worshipped alone. Every aspect of Shakti has Her Bhairava and both are worshipped together. Every Mahavidya has Her corresponding Bhairava. The same is the case with the Kul-devis of Kashmiri Brahmins. Ragnya's Bhairava is Bhuteshwar, Sharika's Bhairava is Vemdeva, Jwala's Bhairava is Mahadeva and Bala Tripura Sundari's Bhairava is Kameshwar. Similarly Shaiva's cannot ignore the consort of Shiva—the Devi and Shaiva and Shakta Upasana cannot be seperated.

There are two broad forms of Shakta worship viz the Shri Kul (श्रीकुल) and Kali Kul (काली कुल). Kularnava Tantra is the authoritative Agam for Shri Kul and the Mahanirvana Tantra for Kali Kul. The Sammohan Tantra (सम्मोहन तंत्र) Chap. VI mentions 64 Tantras, 327 Upatantras, and several yamalas, Damaras, Samhitas

and other scriptures of the Shaktas and 32 Tantras, 125 Upatantras and Yamalas, Damaras and other scriptures of Shaivas. The number of known Tantras is much less than the number mentioned and they have been either withdrawan or lost.

The question is raised as to the value and worth of the teachings of Agamas. It is answered by Sir John Woodroffe in the following words :—

"In the first place there must be a healthy physical and moral life. To know a thing in its ultimate sense is to be that thing. To know Brahman, is according to Advaita. to be Brahman. ....But to attain and keep this state, as well as progress therein. certain specific means, practices, rituals or disciplines are necessary. The result cannot be got by mere philosophical talk about Brahman. Religion is practical activity. Just as the body requires exercise, training and gymnastic, so does the mind. The means employed are called sadhana. Sadhana is that which leads to Siddhi. Sadhana is development of Shakti. Man is a vast magazine of both latent and expressed power. The object of Sadhana is to develop man's Shakti, whether for temporal or spiritual purposes. But where is Sadhana to be found. Seeing that the Vaidika Achara has fallen into practical desuetude we can find nowhere but in the Agamas and in the Puranas which are replete with Tantrik rituals."*

The sway of Tantra Shastra after the Mahabharata war extended beyond the frontiers of India and included Iran, Afghanistan, Tibet, Burma and nearly south eastern Asian countries and Tantrik literature divided them into three zones viz Vishnukranta (विष्णु क्रान्त) Ratha Kanta (रथक्रान्त) and Ashwa Kranta (अश्वक्रान्त) The North eastern zone came under Vishnu Krant, North western zone under Ratha Kranta and Southern zone under Ashwa Kranta. The dividing point of the aforesaid division was the eastern end of the Vindhyas. The three Kramas (schools) of Tantrik Sadhana prevailed in each of the aforesaid zones viz Kashmir Krama कश्मीर क्रम in Rath Krant; Bang वङ्ग or Gaur Krama in Vishnu Krant and Kerala Krama in Ashwa Krant. The

*Shakti and Shakta by Sir John Woodroffe. P. 60

Shakti-Sangam Tantra
(शक्तिसङ्गमतन्त्र काली खण्ड चतर्थ पटल) speaks of the aforesaid three schools :—

रहस्यं च प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानं संकथ्यते श्रृणु ।
केरलश्च काश्मीरो गौड़ - मार्गस्तृतीयक: ॥

षट् - पञ्चाशद्देश - भेदात् सर्वत्र व्याप्य तिष्ठति ।
अष्टादशेषु देशेषु गौड़ - मार्ग: प्रकीर्तित: ॥

नेपालदेशमारभ्य कलिङ्गान्तं महेश्वरि ।
आर्यावरतं समारभ्य समुद्रान्तं महेश्वरि ॥

केरलाख्य: क्रम: प्रोक्तस्तून विंशांति देशके ।
तदन्य देव देवेशि काश्मीराख्य: क्रम: शुभ: ॥

Eighteen regions of North East beginning from Nepal and going upto Orissa come under the sway of Gaur school; Nineteen regions from Aryavarta upto the seas come under Kerala Krama and the remaining eighteen come under Kashmir Krama. Kashmir occupied a prominent place in the field of Tantrik worship during the past Mahabharata period. Its scholars and savants were treated as authorities for the Kashmir Krama in the regions North-West of the Vindhyas. As in the parts of India there were votaries of Vishnu, Ganesh and Surya, so were they in Kashmir also but Shiva Shakti worship had a place of its own in Kashmir.

It was in Kashmir that the Adi - Shankaracharya realized the full impact of Shakti. There is controversy with regard to the age of Adi Shankaracharya. According to one view he was born in 740 A.D. while according to the Kanchi Math history the year of his birth is said to be 509 B.C. The present Shankaracharya of Kanchi Math, Jagatguru Shrimad Chandra Shekhar Sarswati Maharaj, the greatest savant of present day India, is sixty eighth in line of spiritual descent from the Adi Shankaracharya. The Kanchi records give the chronological table of all the Shankaracharyas of Kanchi Math together with their names and dates of assumption of office by them. In spiritual descent, on an average, there are usually three holders of the office in a century. Very often a holder of office takes a boy disciple in the later period

of his life and the successor if he does not meet a premature death may continue in the seat of his office for a long span of years. Among the Shankaracharyas of Kanchi Math as many as 11 Shankaracharyas including the present one have held their office for more than 60 years. Out of them the second Shankaracharya presided over the Math for 70 years, the fourth for 96 years, the sixth for 81 years, the eighth for 83 years and the fifty-third for 81 years. The present Shankaracharya has been holding his office for 68 years.

The Adi Shankaracharya dividing the country into four zones founded four Maths (मठ); Jyotir Math at Joshimath near Almora district of U. P.; Govardhan at Puri (Orissa), Sharda at Dwarka (Saurashtra) and Shringeri in south. After installing his disciples in each of these Maths, who were also called Shankaracharyas, the Adi Shankaracharya retired to Kanchi where also he had a Math, the fifth, and another disciple of the Adi Shankaracharya became the Shankaracharya of the Kanchi Math.

The Kanchi parampara also finds support from the history of the Gaudapadacharya Math or Kaivalya Math (कैवल्य मठ) now called the Kavale Math (कावले मठ) of Saraswat Brahmins. It was founded by Swami Vivarnananda at the same time when the Adi Shankaracharya founded his Maths. Sri Gaudapadacharya's disciple was Shri Govindacharya. The latter had two disciples—the Adi Shankaracharya and Swami Vivarnananda. The headquarter of the Kavale Math is near the city of Goa and the present head of the Math Shrimad Sacchidananda Saraswati Maharaj is seventy-sixth in line of descent from Swami Vivarnananda. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of Kanchi records which give the date of Shri Shankar's (Adi Shankaracharyas) birth as 2593th year of Kaliyuga era which corresponds to 509 B. C. The aforesaid date of Shri Shankar's birth is also supported by some Jain compositions and the "Brihat Shankara Vijaya" by Shri Chitsukhacharya who was also a disciple of the Adi Shankaracharya. It would appear that the Maths founded by the Adi Shankaracharya and the Kavale Math are the oldest monastic institutions in India. All the aforesaid Shri Shankara Maths have Shri Yantras installed therein and the worship of Shri

Yantras is performed according to Tantrik rites as prescribed by the Parashuram Kalpa Sutra (परशुराम कल्पसूत्र).

Kashmir was the centre of Tantrik as also of Sanskrit learning when the Adi Shankaracharya visited Kashmir. Perhaps the Sanskrit University in Kashmir in those days was located near the shrine of Shardaji near the banks of Krishna Ganga—now in Pakistan occupied Kashmir. The Saraswat Brahmins who left their homeland more than two thousand years back and settled in Saurashtra, Maharashtra, Gujrat, Karnataka and Kerala, have a tradition that their homeland was Kashmir. They hold Sharda Devi in great veneration. I visited the Sharda Devi shrine alongwith my late grand father-in-law, Dr. Balkrishna Kaul in the summer of 1935. My late wife Girija and members of Dr. Kaul's family were in the party. The shrine is located on a hill top like the shrine of Jwalaji. The steps leading to the top of the hill appeared to be twisted as if they had been battered by an earthquake. The question as to when did the University township cease to exist requires investigation. It was in the Shrine itself that I first met the late Pandit Shridhar Joo Dhar who had become my guide and philosopher in the closing years of his life. He was the greatest living Shakta Sadhak of his days and his death last year was a great loss to the Tantrik World.

Swami Vivarnananda, the founder of the Kavale Math was a Saraswat and very likely a Kashmiri Brahmin. Even in Adi Shankaracharya's times the sway of Kashmir School had extended to far south. The famous temple of Kanya Kumari is a gift of Kashmir Krama to the country. The rites performed in the temple are in accordance with the Kashmir Krama.

Hindusim, as it emerged after the carnage of the Mahabharata war, has the fullest impress of Tantras on it. In the words of Shri Aurobindo modern Hinduism is ninety percent Tantrik. It influenced Jainism and Buddhism also and there are Jain and Buddhist Tantras. Gautam Buddha denounced the Vedas and also the Tantriks. There are any number of Buddhist Jataks in which the Tantrik Brahmins are badly criticised. It appears that by that time some degenerate Tantrik Cults had come up and so-called Tantrik widely practised

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सर्वेभ्यश्चोत्तमा वेदा वेदेभ्यो वैष्णवं परम् ।
वैष्णवादुत्तमं शैवं शैवाद् दक्षिणमुत्तमम् ॥
दक्षिणादुत्तमं वामं वामात् सिद्धान्तमुत्तमम् ।
सिद्धान्तादुत्तमं कौलं कौलात् परतरं नहि ॥
गुह्याद् गुह्यतरं देवि सारत्सारतरं परम् ।
साक्षात् परतरं देवि कर्णात् कर्णगतं कुलम् ॥

They are Vedachar, Vaishnavachar, Shaivachar Dakshinachar, Vamachar, Siddhantachar, and Kaulachar in order of their graded superiority, Kaulachar being superior to all. There is nothing above Kaulachar. It is most secret and subtle and this only is the Sakshat Param tatwa which travelling from ear to ear remains always".

The aforesaid first four are paths of Pravrithi (प्रवृत्ति) and the rest from Vamachar onwards lead to (निवृत्ति) Nivritti. In the first four the practitioner is in Pashubhava (पशुभाव) and from Vamachar and onwards he assumes the Veerabhava (वीर भाव) In Vamachar worship the five *makars* are used viz meat, wine, fish, fried cereal and communion between man and woman. (मांस, मदिरा, मत्स्य, मुद्रा, मैथुन) It is the use of the *five makars* by the shakta sadhaks which has been subjected to criticism since long as has been mentioned by Sir John Woodraffe. The shakta practioners have never shown any anxiety to meet ignorant criticism because they were always anxious to keep their highly powerful mode of worship a close secret. The veerabhava is not meant for all. It is Raj Vidya (राज विद्या) princely knowledge Guhya Vidya (गुह्य विद्या) secret knowledge which is meant only for the elite, the select few. It is full of dangers and pitfalls and even Yogins cannot easily be admitted into its secrets.

कौलो मार्गः परम गहनो योगिनामप्यगम्यः ।

[Devi Rahasya—P. 89]

Only that person is admitted in Veerachar who has sufficient self-discipline and control over his body and senses and who would

not be tempted to misuse his powers. Such misuse leads to the cultivation of Siddhis and black magic and hinders spiritual progress. The person who is qualified to handle this highly potent sadhana should be free from avarice and blind to the wealth of others (परद्रव्येषु यॊन्धश्च), impotent for women other than his wife (परस्त्रीषु नपुंसकः) dumb in talking ill of others (परापवादयो मूकः), and should have mastery over his senses (सर्वदा विजितेन्द्रियः). Only such a person can safely handle the stages of Sadhna from Vamachar to Kaulachar.

There is nothing obnoxious in meat, fish and fried cereal. The Kashmiri Brahmins freely use meat and fish in 'Herat Puja', on the occasion of 'Khechir Mawas' and these are used during the Navaratras by those whose Kul Devis are Sharika and Jwala and in Shradhapuja for a departed person. Most of Kashmiri Brahmins are non-vegetarians and meat and fish form part of their diet. Wine taken in measured dose is tonic and medicine but its misuse is disastrous. There are strict injunctions of the shastra that wine should be taken only in the course of sadhana and in a restricted manner. The practice of shakta sadhana in its upper reaches awakens the dormant centres of energy in the body and raises ferment in it. During such phases the use of wine, meat, and fish becomes necessary to sustain the body lest it should break. Further, the Tantrik practioner uses the very things which rouse sense and passion in order to subdue them. Poison is used to eliminate the poison itself. The Kularnava Tantra says ;—

तृप्त्यर्थं सर्वदेवानां[1] ब्रह्मज्ञानार्थमेव[2] च ।
सेवेत मद्य[3] मांसानि तृष्णया चेत् स पातकी ॥

[Kularnava Tantra 5th Ullas V. 86]

As for the last M, it symbolises the cosmic process of creation. It is the adaptation of the sanskar of the Hindus—the Garbhadana Sanskar (गर्भादान संस्कार). The Mahanirvana Tantra makes the emphatic assertion that in the "fifth tatwa" the participant should only be a Swakiya (स्वकीया), the lawfully wedded wife and no one else;

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1. पितृदेवानां 2. ब्रह्मण्यानस्थिराय 3. मधु

These are alternate readings—Ed.

शेषतत्त्वं महेशानि ! निर्वीर्ये प्रबले कलौ ।
स्वकीया केवलाज्ञेया सर्वदोष विवर्जिता ॥

O Consort of Shiva ! in this strong Kaliyuga which has an enervating effect, for the remaining fifth tatwa viz 'maithun', only the lawfully wedded wife should be made the participant as she alone is free from all blemishes. [Mahanirvana Tantra Chap. VI—14]

The Veerachar Sadhana and the subsequent stages leading to Kaulachar can only be safely performed by a householder. In such worship it is necessary for the practitioner to have a female partner as his shakti and the wife is the safest shakti. Solo efforts in shakti worship are always fraught with risks and dangers. Wife as shakti acts as a shock absorber and safety valve and provides a shield against adverse currents which often come in his way besides helping him in his sadhana. But Shakti worship with another woman who is not the wife—a parkiya (परकीया)—is fraught with great dangers which may unhinge the practioner's mind or may even prove fatal. It may be frankly stated that the worship invo'ving sex union with wife is always in privacy of the two and any suggestion that such acts are indulged in groups is patently absurd and needs no comment.

Lastly, the sadhak arrives in the Divya Bhava where he no longer needs the use of meat, wine etc. and the crutches of *makars* are discarded. Non-vegetarian diet is no longer necessary. Sex union with his shakti assumes the shape of cosmic union that takes place when the Kundalini rising from her seat in the base of the spine, the four petalled Muladhar Chakra, goes up piercing the upper Chakras viz Swadhishthan Manipur, Anahat, Visshudha, and Agya and meets her Lord in the uppermost thousand - petalled chakra,. the Sahsrar. The union of the two symbol'ses the setting into motion the creative process in the universe. The practitioner, and such exalted sadhaks are few, reaches the top of the Everest in his spiritual climb and becomes a Kaul, an Aghoreshwara. He has burnt all his Karmic bonds, there is no death or rebirth for him, neither Mangal (मंगल) or Amangal (अमंगल) nor pain or pleasure. While he is in his mortal body he is a Shiva and when he leaves his body he remains on the astral

plane as long as he likes having become a sun of a solar system of his own. He carries on his wishes from the astral plane through the medium of other persons. The shastra is full of praise for Kaulas. The line of such Kaulas has continued unbroken in Kashmir since times immemorial and they along with the few advanced Sadhaks have been directing the Kashmir Krama while the people in general carried on their general (सामान्य) Kulapuja.

The Kashmiri Brahmans who are the only remnant left of the Hindus of Kashmir, the rest having been converted to Islam, have shown an amazing tenacity in sticking to their Vedic and Tantrik heritage. Their shakha is Kath (कठ) and their veda is Krishna Yajurveda. Their *grihya sutra* which controls their rituals is Laughakshi, which certainly goes back prior to the Mahabharata era. I doubt if there is any other section of the Hindu community in India which has kept up its Vedic and Tantrik heritage in all its purity unaffected by the tidal waves of Jainism, Buddhism and the later equally strong Vaishnava movements led by Ramanujacharya, Ramanand, Madhavacharya, Vallabhacharya and Nimbarkacharya. Some individuals might have been influenced by the teaching of the aforesaid Acharyas but the community as a whole firmly stuck to its old moorings.

Buddhism made a great impact in Kashmir during and after the period of Emperor Ashok but the last ditchers among the community stuck to their guns and remained steadfast.

For nearly 300 years beginning from the IX century A. D. till the commencement of XI century A. D. Kashmir remained under the spell of the brilliant sages and savants who propounded the Kashmir Shaivism (शैवदर्शन) and Trika Shastra. Their unbroken chain beginning from Shri Kantha and followed by Vasugupta, Kallata, Somananda, Utpalacharya, Lakshmana, Abhinavagupta, Khsemraja and Yogaraja raised Kashmir Shaivism to sublime heights. After the Adi Shankaracharya, no other sage or savant occupies such a dazzling place of honour among the Hindus than Mahamaheshwara Abhinavagupta.

Sir John Woodroffe says :—

"Unsurpassed for its profound analysis is the account of the thirty-six Tattwas or stages of cosmic Evolution (accepted by both Shaivas and Shaktas) given by the Northern Shaiva School of the Agama........."

"In fact Shakta literature is in parts unintelligible to one unacquainted with some features of what is cnlled the Shaiva Darshan"

The Trika Shastra also lays down the practical forms of Sadhana. While the culminating points in Shakta Sadhana and the Trika Sadhana are the same but the starting points are different. For a Shakta Kashmiri Brahmin his form of Sadhana is well chalked out in the prescribed forms of worship of Ragnya, Sharika, Jwala etc. but the Sadhana mentioned in the Malinivijayottara Tantra (which lays down the Trika Sadhana) is different though there are common points. I have considered the aspects of Shaiva Darshana and Trika Shastra as also the forms of Shiva-Shakti worship at some length in my Review of the Biography of Bhagwan Gopi Nath Ji of Kashmir and in a letter which I wrote to Swami Lakshman Ji Maharaj, the famous Shaiva philosopher of Kashmir, which have been published in the form of a booklet★

I have tried to avoid repitition of what I have said in my "Review" and in my letter to Swamiji. But the teachings of Shaiva Darshan and Trika have raised a conflict among the Kashmiris whether, particularly in their special (विशेष) Sadhana, they should follow their old traditional path or giving up their Ragnya, Sharika and Jwala, should follow the path as prescribed by Trika Shastra. Swami Lakshman Ji Maharaj has yet to answer this question.

X X

★"Review on the Biography of Bhagwan Gopinath Ji of Kashmir", Publisheed by Bhagwan Gopi Nath Ji Trnst, Kharyar, Srinagar, Kashmir. Catalogued in the Library of Congress, Washington D.C.; U,S,A.

The advent of Islam in Kashmir wiped off the Hindus leaving only 11 families, some say 9. It is a tribute to their amazing tenacity that the few who remained blossomed again. They had occasional periods of respite particularly in the reign of Zainul-Ab-din and in phases after the Moghul conquest of Kashmir. Their plight worsened again during the Pathan rule and then improved again during the Sikh and Dogra regimes. Now again they are in low waters. Their economic condition is bad and they are facing unemployment. The younger generation, though highly educated has lost its religious moorings and has become rudderless. 'Kashmir is no longer the famous seat of Sanskrit learning as it was in former days. There is no Sanskrit Department in the Kashmir University. Members of our priestly class who are our traditional teachers and custodian of our religious and cultural heritage are leaving their vocations and their children are taking to other professions. The perennial source of ancient Kashmir-Krama seem to have dried up. This has caused grave concern to shaktas all over India. The weakening of the Kashmir Krama is creating a great imbalance in Shakta worship. Sometimes back the matter was considered by the executive committee of the All-India Shakta sammelan and it expressed its serious anxiety over the prevailing conditions in Kashmir, and I as the president of the Sammelan was asked to go to Kashmir and assess the situation. I have been to Kashmir several times during the last five years and even though what I have seen has pained me but I have not lost hope. Things could not be worse than what they were when we were only 9 or 11 families left. Then we rose as if from ashes. I have not met initiates in our Kaul Sadhana besides a very few. But there are quite a number of eminent Sanskrit scholars. It is indeed a matter of regret that nearly 4000 Sanskrit manuscripts pertaining or Shakta worship and Shaiva Darshan were lying uncatalogued in some almirahs of the Research Department and Archives in Srinagar. I wrote about them to the Government of Jammu & Kashmir as also to the Union Government. Now they have been removed and handed over to the Kashmir University, which does not have a Sanskrit department. I do not know how the Kashmir University proposes to deal with them.

Tantricism and Kaulachar in Kashmir, having a hoary past, has gone on, facing ups and downs and will continue to go on. A letter which I received from late Pandit Shridhar Joo Dhar is instructive and interesting. It runs thus :—

AUM

S. D. Dhar
Retired Conservator of Forests.

Chota Bazar.
Kani-kadal, Srinagar.
Tuesday, 10th August, 1976.

My dear Shriman Shivaji,

Many thanks for your so affectionate letter of 27th July. Your contact with such an elevated Shakta Yogin as your Gurudev Maharaj could not he accidental. Apparently you have been carrying the seed of your spiritual Sadhana from many past births and you seem destined to be a torchbearer of our highly inspiring ancient Kaulachar. You are now in the hands of Bhagwan Gopi Nath Ji Maharaj who will raise you to the highest pinnacle of self-realisation in due course.

Our Kaulachar has received a great set-back in Kashmir. There is however a redeeming feature. I have come across some young aspirants who are collecting all available connected literature and conducting research in its sadhana. Their efforts will not go in vain and our spiritual resurgence is only a matter of time.

The "Trika"philosophy has its own charm. I have not studied it critically but I feel that it appeals more to the present day youth as it does not involve much of practical kriya such as Yantra Puja and all its usual rites and is mainly based on "Vimarsha". I am however confident that it will not eclipse our "Kaulachar" which has so far survived the onslaughts of Buddhism, Shaivism and Islam.

It is a well - established fact that a tree grows best in its own habitat i.e. natural environment. So it is with every human being. One's "Jati-dharma" is its natural environment and so long as he remains within fold and limits he is sure to flourish well. This is what our Avtars have stressed by example and precept. Our effort should naturally be to uphold our jati-dharma on which one's Kul-dharma is essentially based. It is very laudable that you are so determined

to uphold our 'Kul-dharma' and I pray that your efforts may succeed in the renaissance of your "kaulachar". OM TAT SAT.

I am well. I trust this finds you in the best of health along with your wife and others.

With all best wishes

Yours Own
S. D. Dhar.

There are followers of "Kashmir Krama" all over India and some of them are persons of high standing in spiritual field. But the "Kashmir Krama" has to be directed by savants who spring from the soil of Kashmir which is the natural habitat of the Directors of the "Kashmir Krama." Our Kula Devis--Rajnya, Sharika, Jwala and Bala Tripurasundari will soon fill the void.

MANKHA AND "SRIKANTHACARITAM"

—Dr. Kaushalya Wali.*

Mankha's name is among the foremost poets of Kashmir. His other names are Mankhaka or Mankhuka. His birthplace is Kashmir[1]. His father's name is Visvavarta whose name is mentioned with great respect in 'Srikanthacaritam.' Mankha's brother was Alankara.[2] According to Kalhana Alankara was a poet and a minister in the time of the kings sussala and Jayasinha of Kashmir[3]. Mankha himself has called him Lankana or Lankaka in his work[4]. According to Dr. Stein—"Mankha regards his brother deeply well-versed in grammar

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१. श्रीण्ठचरितम् - ३.६३ (Srikanthacaritam 3,63)

अथोद्‌भूत्तस्य कनिष्ठमोदर : स मङ्खको यस्य शिशोरतन्वत ।
शिरस्योपाढा गुरुपादरेणव: सरस्वतीकामंणन्चूणं नैपुणम् ॥

२. श्रीक्ण्ठहचरितम् - ३.५६ (Srikanthacaritam 3,56)

i) तत: कनीयानजनिष्ठ विष्टपत्रयेऽप्यनीच्छन्नगतागतैगुंणैं: ।
श्रयन्नलङ्कार इति प्ररुढतां सरस्वतीपादरजोतिथो पथि ॥

ii) वदान्यमास्त्यान बृहत्कृपारस्वप्रवाहशङ्का जनमैकदांक्षणम् ।
स्वसूवितकीर्तिप्रसरै रनश्वरं स विश्ववतस्यिमवाप नन्दनम् ॥

3, Rajatarangini VIII.5.3423

स्नानकोश्ठमठब्रह्मपुरी सेत्वादिकर्मंणा ।
सोऽलङ्‌चकारालङ्कारो बृहद्‌गञ्जाधिपो धरास् ॥

4. Srikanthacaritam 25.15

मदग्रजन्मन: श्रीमल्लककस्य समागृहम् ।
तेऽध्यासते च विस्रब्धा: सारसा इव मानसम् ॥

*Reader, P. G. Deptt. of Sanskrit, Jammu University.

and mentions his famous name as Lankaka[5]. Mankha's grandfather is known as Manmatha[6]. Mankha's three brothers were Srngara, Bhanga and Alankara. Mankha was the youngest of all. He and his two elder brothers were not only scholars but were on high posts in the administration of Kashmir. For instance Srngara helped the king Sussala in a war against Harsadeva. It is being said that as a result of this victory on account of defeating Harsadeva, he was given the post of Brhattantrapati. Alankara was a grammarian and according to Kalhana was a minister or a Sandhivigrahika[7]. Mankha also held a high post—probably either Pargana or Governor[8]. At the end of every canto of his work 'Srikanthacarita, he calls himself Raja naka Mahakaviraja Mankha[9]. Ruyyaka was his teacher, to whom he shows great reverance in his own work[10]. In the world of Sanskrit literature, Mankha is among those rare poets who give details in his writing about himself and his dynasty.

We have no difficulty in deciding the time of Mankha, Mankha lived in Kashmir in the kingdom of King Sussala and Jayasinha. The time of the king Jayasinha is 1127 to 1159 A. D. According

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5. Chronicle of the kings of Kashmir Vol. II, Footnote 2-5,2433.
6. Srikanthacaritam III, 3

   स मन्मथो नाम जगाम तद्भवि प्रथा प्रसन्नेश्वरदृष्टिभाजनम् ।
   न मार्गगानां सुमनोतयात्मनां मनागपि क्षेपकलासु शिक्षित: ॥
7. Kalhana's Rajatarangin—Volume VIII
8. (Rajatarangini—VIII V. 3354)

   सान्धिविग्रहिको मङ्खक्योऽलङ्कारसोदर: ।
   स मठस्यामवप्रष्ठ: श्रीकण्ठस्य प्रतिष्ठया ॥
9. Srikanthacaritam

   श्रीराजानकविश्ववर्त्तसूनोमहाकविराजानक श्रीमङ्खस्य कृतौ श्रीकण्ठचरिते महाकाव्ये ।
10. Srikanthacaritam XXV.30

   त श्रीरुय्यकमालोक्य स प्रियं गुरुमग्रहीत् ।
   सौहार्दप्रश्रयरसस्रोतरूस मेदमज्जनम् ॥

to Dr. Buhler, Srikanthacarita was composed by Mankha between 1135 to 1145 A. D.[11] According to Kalhana, the then king of Kashmir appointed Mankha as ambassador[12]. On the basis of these facts Mankha's time may be determined as 12th century A. D. Mankha has mentioned the name of Rajasekhara and Bilhana in his work and declared them poets of repute. The above - mentioned date is supported by this reference.[13]

Mankha's work is known as "Srikanthacaritam". This mahakavya is divided into twenty five cantos. Mankha has composed this work while keeping in view the characteristics of Mahakavya. This work is a proof to the fact that the poet is having command on Sanskrit language and has the full capacity to write the mahakavya which was composed on the occasion of the destruction of Tripurasura by Siva. The beautiful descriptions we come across in 'Srikanthacaritam' the commencement of various seasons of natural climate, the scene of sun-rise and sun-set.

The poet gives in detail in the 3rd canto as to what made him to write this mahakavya. In the twenty fifth canto, the poet gives the full details of his circumstances [14] According to the poet, he gave his work to the highest scholars and administrators for their comments. This meeting of the scholars took place in the house of his brother Alankara. The meeting was attended by thirty members

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11. Buhler's report on Kashmir P. 50
12. Rajatarangini VIII.3349 to 3406
13. Srikanthacaritam XXV74,79

    प्रक्रमैहृस्वक्रिम्णो मुरारिमनुधावतः ।

    श्रीराजशेखरगिरो नीवी यस्योक्तिसम्पदाम् ॥

    तथोपचस्करे येन निजवाङ्मयदर्पणः ॥

    बिल्हणप्रौढिसङ्क्रान्तौ यथा योग्यत्वमग्रहीत ॥
14. Srikanthacaritam III 31 to 78

The poet does not make us famillar only with the names of scholars but tells us the branch of knowledge in which each scholar was an expert. This information is of great importance from the viewpoint of the details supplied to us about the then reputed scholars. The information regarding the scholars is as under :-

1. The poet Ananda by name was well-vesed in Nyaya philosophy[15].
2. Sambhur's son Ananda was a Vaidya [16]
3. Alakadatta's disciple "Kalyana" by name was expert in Sahitya-sastra.[17]
4. Garga was an expert in Sahitya.[18]
5. Govinda had specialized in Sahitya.[19]
6. Janakaraja was in know- of grammar and Vedas.[20]
7. Jalhana knew Sahitya.[21]

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15. Srikanthacaritam XXV.84
    तं स तर्कमहाम्भोधिकुम्भसंभवमाचिचत् ।
    अयानन्दं स्निग्धदृङन्यासदीर्घेन्दीवरदामभि: ।।
16. Srikanthacaritam XXV.97
    अशेषभिषगग्रण्य शरण्य शास्त्रपद्धते: ।
    ववन्देऽथ तमानन्दं सुतं शंभुमहाकवे: ।।
17. Srikanthacaritam XXV.80
    ततबृहकथाकेलिपरिश्रमनिरङ्कुशम् ।
    तं प्रश्रयप्रयत्नेन कल्याणं सममीमनत् ।।
18. Srikanthacaritam XXV.56
    स खन्मार्गचरो गर्गमानर्चंस्थविर चिरम् ।
    सत्कवीनां तमग्रण्यं द्रोण चापमृतामिव ।।
19. Srikanthaoaritam XXV.77
    पुमानमाभिन्नन्येन कृत्यं पाशिंडत्यपद्धत: ।
    निसर्गत्रिमसंदिग्धं श्रीगोविन्दमविन्दत् ।।
20. Srikanthacaritam XXV.93
    आतन्वन्वियाकूतं द्रनम्रण मौलिना ।
    ततो जनकराजेन तेन संतेुष्य तुष्टुवे ।।
21. Srikanthacaritam XXV.75
    श्रीमद्राजपुरीसांधिविग्रहस्य तिगिनयोम् ।
    अथानर्चं वचोभिस्तं जल्हणं विनयान्वित: ।।

8. Mimamsa Sastra was the special field of Jinduka.[22]

9. Trailokya was the specialist in Mimamsa.[23]

10. Nandana knew Vedanta.[24]

Naga knew grammar and Alankara.[25]

Patu was a specialist in Sahityasastra.[26] Padmaraja was well-versed in Sahitya.[27] Prakata knew Vedanta.[28] Bhudda specialised in Sahitya,[29]

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22. Srikanthacaritam XXV-72.
सुवृत्तं कमलब्धोर्च्वंपदं परिचितं दृशोः ।
तं च वागीश्वरीकेलिकन्दुकं जिन्दुकं व्यधात् ॥

23. Srikanthacaritam XXV-66
तं श्रीत्रैलोक्यमालोक्य गण्यं सत्कर्मिणां धुरि ।
ययौ मुहुरधिज्यस्य कार्मुकस्य सधर्मताम् ॥

24. Srikanthacaritam XXV-25
पुंनानमन्तिक तस्य प्रथमं ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ।
विद्वत्संक्रन्दनं तत्र स नन्दनमवन्दत ॥

25. Srikanthacaritam XXV-64
वयसो मध्यमत्वेऽपि गुणैरधिकवार्द्धकम् ।
नागं साहित्यविद्यायाः सौविदल्लं तमैक्षत् ॥

26. Srikanthacaritam XXV-131
सकृदाकर्णनघ्रातसमस्तग्रन्थसंसृतेः ।
इति तस्य पटोः पट्वीं गिरं चिरमचर्चयत् ॥

27. Srikanthacatitm XXV 86.
ऋतुतुषन्निस्तूषया भूषितं कविविद्यया ।
तं पद्मराजमव्याजव्याहारविनियु (नयो) क्तिभिः ॥

28. Srikanthacaritam XXV-94
व्यनक्ति पृथु सामर्थ्यमाख्याया एव योऽक्षरैः ।
जयेऽभिनवगुप्तस्य प्रकटः प्रथमो गुरुः ॥

29. Srikanthacaritam XXV-82
भुड्डश्रीवत्सनामानौ सूरी सब्रह्मचारिणौ ।
वाक्यैर्जितामृतस्वादैः सादरं तावभाषत ॥

Mandana was the knower of all the branches of knowledge.[30] He was the son of Srigarbha. Yogaraja knew Sahitya.[31]
Ramyadeva was well-versed. in Veda.[32] Ruyyaka knew Alankara-sastra[33]. Laksamideva was good at Vedas.[34] Lostadeva knew Sahitya[35]. Vageeswara was a knower of Sahitya.[36] Srigarbha's son Srikantha was specialist in Sahitya[37]. Srigarbha had depth in Sahitya[38]. Sriguna

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30. Srikanthacaritam XXV-53
क्रमादजनि सौन्दर्यरसस्मेरमुखः सखा ।
श्रैचार्भिर्मण्डनस्तस्य पारगाय स चक्षुषेः ।।
31. Srikanthacaritam XXV-107
जोगराजमुपाध्यायं ध्यायन्त शुभमञ्जसा ।
अथ भक्त्या तमान्र्चतत्तच्चचभिरर्चितम् ।।
32. Srikanthacaritam XXV-33
निस्तुषीकृतवैदुष्यं स्मयमात्सर्यसंहृतेः ।
धृतप्रणतिपारम्यं रम्यदेवं तमैक्षत् ।।
33. तं श्रीरुय्यकमालोक्य स प्रियं गुरुमग्रहीत् ।
सौहार्दप्रश्रय रस्रोतः संभेदमञ्जनम् ।।
34. Srikanthacaritam XXV, 33
35. Srikanthacaritam XXV-36
कतिचिल्लोष्टदेवस्य तस्येति मुखतोऽश्रृणोत् ।
श्रीलङ्कक प्रति प्रोतचारुचातुरसा गिरः ।।
36. Srikanthacaritam XXV 127
ततो यथार्थनामानं द्विजं वागीश्वराभिधम् ।
अस्तोष्ट पठितश्लोकमिति श्रीलङ्कक प्रति ।।
37. Srikanthacaritam XXV-54
ततो न्यधित निःशेषवैदुषीकेलिसद्मनि ।
श्रीकण्ठे विहितोत्कण्ठे दृशं तदनुजन्मनि ।
38. Srikanthacaritam XXV-39
तमदर्शथं श्रोत्रपथसख्यस्पृशा दृशा ।
अदभ्रगुणसंदर्भ श्रीगर्भं हर्षनिर्भरः ।।

was in know of Mimamsa[39]. Srivatsa specialised in Sahitya[40]. Sastha's special field was Sahitya.[41]

Besides these twenty seven scholars, there were three more personalities in the meeting who were not scholars but were worthy of honour. Out of these three, two were ambassadors :- (i) The ambassador sent by the king Aparaditya of Konkana was called Tejakantha (2) The ambassador sent by the king Govindacandra of Kannauja was called Suhala. The third person was known by the name of Damodara. All these details tell us the importance of the meeting. The meeting was attended by scholars and critics. These critics were experts in different branches of knowledge and men of repute. It was for the first time that the poetry of Kashmir was submitted for comments to the contemporary critics.

The criticism of poetry by the schlolars draws our attention to to the fact that the practice of the social and scholarly debate and exchange of ideas was in vogue in Kashmir of Manka's time. Besides we are equipped with valuable and detailed historical descriptions. First of all a lot of help is rendered to us in determing the date of several poets and scholars. For instance we are helped in determining the time of Ruyyaka. Mankha's owntime is determined also. We become familiar with the names of two ambassadors. The dated inscription of the kings of Konkana and Kannauja are available. Aparaditye's time can be between 1185 to 1186 A. D. and Govindacandra's time can be between 1120 to 1144 A.D. The presence

39. Srikanthacaritam XXV 88
अगर्हर्ग्रहितमतन्यायोपन्यासदेशिकम् ।
श्रीगुन्नमत्प्रीति ततस्तं प्रत्यपद्यत ॥

40. Srikanthacaritam XXV-82
भुड्डश्रीवत्सनामानौ सूरी सब्रह्मचारिणौ
वाक्यैर्जितामृतस्वादैः सादरं तावभाषत ॥

41. Srikanthacaritam XXV-70
पादोपसंङ्ग्रहव्यग्रविवलत्पाणिपल्लवः ।
तं षठठं विबुधप्रष्ठं स सोत्कराठमवैक्षत ॥

of ambassadors in Kashmir is a proof of this fact that Kashmir had friendly political relations with other provinces. We also infer that Aparaditya's reign continued for a long time. Aparaditya happens to be the commentator of Yajnavalkya Smrti which has an importont place in law books.

Srikanthacaritam starts with Mangalacarana in praise of Siva[42]. In the second canto the poet has described the general qualities of poets.[43] Mankha has emphasised the intellectual arguments. There is a hint to the point as to what type of intellectual dialogues are essential for the development of the tendency of poetry.[44]

In the third canto, the poet gives us an idea of life in Kashmir during his time. For instance the description of the firepot is most fascinating.[45]

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42. Srikanthacaritam—
जीयात्त्कृतानङ्गपतङ्गदाहः खट्वाङ्गिनो नेत्रशिखिप्रदीपः ।
यस्यान्तिके शुभ्रदशानिवेशश्रियं किरीटेन्दुकराः श्रयन्ते ॥

43. Srikanthacaritam II. 1, 5, 30.
वितीर्णशिक्षा इव हृत्पदस्थसरस्वतीवाहनराजहंसैः ।
ये क्षीरनीर प्रविभागहक्षाः विवेकिनस्ते कवयो जयन्ति ॥
अज्ञातपाण्डित्यरहस्यमुद्रा ये काव्यमार्गे दधतेऽभिमानम् ।
ते गारुड़ीयाननधीत्य मन्त्रान् हालाहलास्वादनमारभन्ते ॥
अर्थोऽस्ति चेन्न पदशुद्धिथास्ति सापि जो रीतिरस्ति यदि सा घुटना कुतस्त्या ।
साप्यस्ति चेन्न नववक्रगतिस्तदेतद् व्यर्थं विना रसमहो गहनं कवित्त्वम् ॥

44. Srikadthacaritam II, 7, 12
तत्तद्विचारोपनिषद्विमृष्टं काव्यं कवेः पुष्यति निस्तुषत्वम् ।
न रत्नमायाति हि निर्मलत्वं शाणोपलारोपणमन्तरेण ॥
विना न साहित्यविदा परत्रगुणः कथञ्चित्प्रथते कवीनाम् ।
आलम्बते तत्क्षणमम्भसीव विस्तारमन्यत्र न तैलबिन्दुः ॥

45. Srikanthacaritam III 29.
हिमागमे यत्र गृहेषु योषितां ज्वलद्दहुच्छिद्रसखीहसन्तिका ।
विभाति जेतुं मदनेन शूलिनं धृताततिवह्निमयीव चक्षुषाम् ॥

Mankha disapproves the tendency of his contemporary poets to beautify their poetry with Alankaras.[46] He emphatically declares about his work that was written by him to please Srikantha alone and not to flatter anyone.[47] He seems to be all against court-poetry. Mankha welcomes the destruction of Tripurasura by Siva in "Srikanthacaritam."

Every one of us desires to have a sympathetic and unprejudiced study of the complete true poetry. Mankha supports this view. His own work seems to be full of the qualities that a mahakavya should have. Hence he was immensely praised by his teacher Ruyyaka.[48] At the end of his work, Mankha tells his readers that the team of scholars listened to his work with great attention and with a critical eye and afterwards showed their reaction.[49] Mankha's poetry is lauded by all the scholars uptil now.

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46. Srikanthacaritam II 42.

    यातास्ते रससारसंग्रहविधिं निष्पीड्य निष्पीड्य ये ।
    वाक्वत्त्वेक्षुलतां पुरा कतिपये तत्त्वस्पृशश्चक्रिरे ।।
    जायन्तेऽद्य यथायथं तु कवयस्ते तत्र संतन्वते ।
    येऽनुप्रासकठोरचित्रयमकश्लेषादिशल्कोच्चयम् ।।

47. Srikanthacaritam XXV. 5,13.

    अहो धन्योऽस्मि यस्येयं स्वच्छन्दापि सरस्वती ।
    विनाश्रीकण्ठम् अन्यत्र नाचरच्चाटुकारिताम् ।।
    विमत्सरश्च विद्वाँश्च श्रोता चेद् घटते गिराम् ।
    स्पन्दते तर्हि वागवल्लीरसं पर्वणि पर्वणि ।।

48. Srikanthacaritam XXV. 139

    धन्यस्त्वं विनिबेशितैर्बहुतिथैरर्थैः स्थितिं बिभ्रती
    न क्वापि स्ववपुः प्रसारितवती पण्यत्वससिद्धये ।
    सालङ्कारपदाधिकध्वनिजुषा मूर्त्या नरीनर्त्यसौ ।
    शंभोर्येन पुरोर्पिता भगवती वाग्देवतानर्तकी ।

49. Stikanthacaritam XXV. 146

    उद्यद्वैद्युतदीप्तिसोदरसरत्सारस्वतज्योतिषा ।
    पूतस्तद्वचसां रसःश्रुतिपुटेः संसत्सदामापपे ।।

At the very outset of his work, Mankha has mentioned "Mankhakosa". The writer of this kosa in Sanskrit is Mankha himself.[50] But this Kosa is not available now. This kosa seems to be popular in Kashmir for a pretty long time.

Mankha's one more work is "Srikantha-sarvasva". Its example is found in "Alankarasarvasva".

While giving the example of "Punaruktavadabhasa," "Srikanthastava" is referred to[51]. On Ruyyaka's "Alankara-sarvasva" is written a commentary by Mankha, that also is called "Alankara-sarvasva" Besides, Mankha himself has written some Alankarasutras which are referred to by one of his students "Samudra-bandha". Samudrabandha has written a commentary on "Alamkarasarvasva" and praised the king Ravivarma of Kolamba.

Jonaraja is the commentator of "Srikanthacaritam". He was cotemporary of Zain-ul-abudin and writer of second Rajatarangini. He has writen a commentary on Bharavi's Kiratanjuniya and several other books.

तेषामुन्मिषत्तालसालसगनौ दृक्शुक्तिपङ्क्तौ शनै ।
आनन्दाश्रुपृषन्मयी तु जघटे मुक्ताफलानां ततिः ।।

50. कुरुतेऽनेकार्थानां शब्दानां मङ्खकः कोशम् ।।

51. अहीनभुजगाधीशवपुर्वलयकङ्कणम्
शैलादिनन्दिचरितं क्षतकन्दर्पदर्पकम् ।।
वृषपुङ्गवलक्ष्माणं शिखिपावकलोचनम् ।
ससर्वमङ्गलं नौमि पार्वतीसखमीश्वरम् ।।

"ROOPA BHAWANI"

IN KASHMIRI LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

*Dr. A. N. Raina**

SANSKRIT :

In Kashmir, poetry has ever been true to religion and thoughr. In early times Sanskrit was the Language, mainly Musical It was the voice from the depth of heart, not a verbal exercise, tinged with any affectation but a simple snd sincere expression of thonght and knowledge preserved for the good of mankind. It was the glorious age of this language in Kashmir when scholars and researchers dived deep to unearth the treasures by the giant intellects whose characteristic zeal for divine wisdom enabled the preservation of knowledge and spiritual experience.

SHAIVISM :

It is believed that phonetic distortion and decay in Sanskrit gave rise to Apabhramsha follwed later by Prakrit. Kashmiri emerged as a language towards the close of the 14th Century when it assumed some form in its original base of Sanskrit. Till then Shaivism had expressed itself as the doctrine of Self-recognition. The doctrine had made an appeal with its love and devotion regarded as the two main planks of this faith. Giant intellects like Abhinava Gupta, Utpaladeva, Kshemendra and other seers and scholars had enriched this thought and culture with their admirable contributions. As a doctrlne of soothing thought Shaivism inspired love and affection in humon hearts discarding all the painful and tortuous methods of seeking God. This soothing faith found a wide appeal accross the Himalayan frontiers into Tibet, China, Kabut, Kandhar and Bactria. Intensive intellectual activity covered a vast field of literature in Philosophy, Poetry, Chronicle writing and

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*B-12, Pamposh Enclave. New Delhi. A retired Professor of versatile eminence.

rhetorics. Kashmir was not a forgotten land of mountains intellectually and spiritually isolated but an illumined literary heaven shedding light of knowledge and wisdom across its Himalayan borders.

ISLAM :

With the coming of Islam, Hinduism came under the influence more refreshing and deeply protestant. Islam, it is to be admitted, gave a jolt to Hinduism in its spiritual slumber of ages. The Buddhism with its virtuous path for life had discarded the fighting element in man. However, the onslaught of Islamic faith could not alter and dive deep into the Philosophic and spiritual attainments of Hinduism. May be Islam in its beginning resorted to force but as time passed force created a subdued apathy in hearts. Passion, rage, and physical conquest made no appeal to people and failed to overpower the good in man. The result was the reflective minds dominated head and heart imploring the need of some sort of apiritual discipline for the daily conduct in life. It was this feeling that stimulated into a rational view when Sufism emerged as a doctrine of oneness based on tolerance and unity. It was a healthy approach to religions based on essential unity for human happiness. A harbinger of peace Sufism or mysticism served Islam in the real sense of the term.

KASHMIR :

Sanskrit suffered change and what followed is known Apabhransha that followed Prakrit. Philologists traced the merger of languages in time and in Kashmir both Apabhransha and Prakrit ultimately merged into Kashmiri—the modern Kashmiri of Lal-Ded.

Kashmiri, it may be mentioned developed as a language. not as a dialect. It emerged in a scientific manner well rooted as it was in its anticident Sanskrit. Within the Panjal ranges and Kajinag mountains Kashmiri became the mother tongue of those peace-loving inhabitants who steadily settled to an appreciation of regular phonological correspondences of certain words and syllables which indicate common roots. Sounds may have suffered a little change, here and there in certain positions to a degree but the identity was retained.

To mention some of the basic words at a glance still in common use among many are, Prakash Sumran Shabd Rishi Sunder anand Samaya Prabhat etc.

Koshur as Kashmiri is called belongs to the Dardic group profoundly affected by the Indo-Aryan spoken Sanskrit and during over two thousand years a part of the "Sanskrit Culture World" it was Yogeshwari Lalla (Lal Ded) whose Vaakh laid a sound foundation of this language. Her Vaakh passed from mouth to mouth in the beginning. Her four-line stanza Vaakh in Kashmiri poetry forms the base of modern Kashmiri. Her verse was uttered with all seriousness saturated as it is with philosophic thought to be pondered over and not only sung and enjoyed. These stanzas became food for deep thinking end in the words of Lal Ded herself "My Guru gave me but one precept— from without withdraw your gaze within, and fix on the inmost self"

It is necessary to mention here that her Guru "Siddha" had an important place in her spiritual attainments.

Philologists may have taken pains to study the original form of Kashmiri but the conclusion is accepted by all that Bhaskara's Lalla-vaakh in Sharda script is to be taken as authentic in modern Kashmiri.

It may not be a digression to say that language has its own rhythm of origin and growth. Time punctuates its pulsation. Nature provides elements for its enrichment. It is then that a language assumes its form. It enters deep into human mind.. Some believe, may be rightly too, that the origin of a language is always divine. It flows out or even sprouts forth from the depth of soul destined to be its progenitor. So has it been with Kashmiri also.

LAL-DED :

Lal-Ded the well known saint-poetess irradiated a deep and impapalble influence with her verse during the 14th century. Her verse had a transforming power of engendering purity and human brotherliness.

"Her message found the response among the people irrespective of caste and creed. Her sayings established a tradition of harmony and tolerance which is our priceless heritage. There is not a Kashmiri, Hindu or Muslim, who had not some of her Vaakhs at the tip of his tongue. "Her Vaakh or pithy poems containing spiritual experience documented in a form which is of immense value to the seeker. These are inspired speech.

Undoubtedly the progenitor of modern Kashmiri Lal-Ded is the first among the moderns not only chronologically but in modern quality of interrogation and expostulation, to her poetry. Her poetry comes alive for us even today.

The close of the 14th century brings to end the age of Yogeshwari Lalla. Till then her Vaakh had established itself and spread like fire in the valley of Kashmir. A climate of modern Kashmiri had covered itself the entire mind and senses of people who readily accepted this Shaiva-Mystic whose minstrel wanderings earned for her the name of divine Mother.

NUNDRISHI :

It is time to see how after Lal Ded followed the line of Sheikh Noor-ud-din, reshi of Chrari-sharif in his Shrukhs educating spiritually the people of Kashmir for over fifty years. (1377-1438 A. D,), in a simple vernacular. The theme, form and tone, was essentially that used by Lal-Ded in her Vaakhs. Of literary interest these pithy verses formed the correct coin of common speech. It is true that Persian influence intensified, but it also is true that interests widened towards a humanist awareness. The modern Kashmiri was taking birth towards an enlightenment and understanding. New words bring new life and standard of literary language develops towards a form of linguistic discipline. By the close of 13th century the age of Yogeshwari Lalla and Nundrishi come to close. Till then her Vaakhs and his shrukhs had established as a corrective for human mind and intellect.

RUPABHAWANI :

By the first water of the 18th century when Rupabhawani passed away (1721 A.D) Kashmiri language had undergone considerable change during about three centuries since the time of Lallashwari. With the

coming of many Iranians from Iran where persecution by Timur drove away rich crop of scholars and seekers. Essentially these Savants after finding an asylum in the happey valley of Kashmir ushered is that branch of Islamic Mysticism known as Sufi-cult. And when Rupa Bhawani appeared on Kashmir scene a synthesis of Hindu and Islamic mysticism had already come to birth. In the back drop of this harmonious attitude to life Rupa Bhawani bacame its vocal interpreter. She became a seer for search but she was Search for herself having attained perfection from her very birth. Rupa, a spring of spiritualism, was destined to attract people from all faiths. Rupa's life reveals a course of events divine indeed but destined to fulfil a purpose. There was spiritual illumination as it were from her very birth. Faith moves mountains as such the palatial house of Pt. Madho Joo Dhar, acquired a sort of divine dimension. Rupa Bhawani will live so long as her verse is there. It is thorefore, imperative that her Vaakhs be understood to the extent possible. In this respect a word about her verses will be to the point. Admirable as the attempt of Sh. T. N. Dhar, who brought out a volume on "Life, teachings and philosophy of Rupa Bhawani" in 1977 is one cannot but value this attempt as a contribution to the literature and language of Kashmir. Any attempt as a ciritical study of her divine verse depends on a careful study of her text prepared by this studious researcher.

That Rupa was light herself, there is no doubt about it. Her utterances are saturated with wisdom, divine learning nothing unusal about her, spiritual experience and attainments. She admits herself to be the spark of great Brahman destined to proclaim "Soham". This message was readily accepted by the Hindus and Muslims alike. It is here that mention of Sufi thought seems necessary.

It has already been mentioned that many Iranians had come to Kashmir and there was an effective influence of Sufiism here. These Sufi Saints like Shah Sadak who tried to measure his spiritual strength with Rupa Bhawani made him accept her superior attainments when Shah Sadak spend years in penance in upper Lar. The reply of Rupa Bhawani

to Shah Sadak was "Surat-ma-zeth". By this time cultural mingling had effected itself and spiritual contacts had brought about identical views and approach to the quest of spirit. Hazrat Hashimbin-Mansoor had already declared "Analhaw" in 1900 A. D. The thesis his book "Kitabul Tawasoon" was "I am truth, God".

In Kashmir the times had changed since the day of Avantivarman (855 to 883 A. D.) of Utpal Dynasty, remembered even today with his temple at Awantipur. His court was adorned by two eminent poets Ratnakar and Anandvardhan. The modelling and drainage system and the drudging of the Jhelum mouth at Baramulla was taken up by Suyya the founder of Suyyapur (Sopore). It may be of interest to mention that the Tantrics opposed to the Brahmins were again in power for some years but rebellion and the economic devastation brought misery to the people. The Rajput of Lohar Dynasty ruled Kashmir like the rest of India for more than a century when Kshtriya rituals entered the Brahamnic cult. As is common with despotic rule the whole period suffered from murders, suicides, corruption—material and moral—a record of which has been prepared by Kalhan Pandit who followed in the 12th century in the reign of Jayasinha. The mysticism from Iran was a slow but soothing stream aimed at raising up of moral and spiritual values and oneness of God. Therefore, Kashmiris readily accepted it in all its traits in which the Keshi order of Nundrishi was also contained. So Kashmiri thinking evolved out of a happy amalgam of Sanskrit, Buddhist and Islamic values.

Now is the turn of the text of Rupa Bhawani's verse, it diction, style and cumulative expression.

STYLE

We owe it to a Brahmin Pandit Kesho Bhat of Rainawari Srinagar, who perpared the text of the Vakhs of Rupa Bhawani originally in Sharda, seen and revised by late Pandit Hara Bhat Shastri before these were published by Kasho Bhat himself. "These Vakks of the Divine Mother do not seen to have gained much currency during the

last 250 years. There is no record of any writing to show that any attention was paid to interpret these verses". It beggars not for a rise towards climax. The reasons are not far to seek. It required a careful study of the original text now avilable in a volume. Original to the core these Vaakhs need reading over and over again. This diction requires thought and understanding of a high order for which it is essential to have some basic knowledge of Shastras. Her thoughts as expressed in her verse leave much to ponder over before realising the meaning. Thus there is more than what meets the eye. It is then that a reader becomes aware of the fact that Rupa Bhawani had a Yogic stand, all her own, in the domain of spirit. She is perfect and as such there is no beginning of an idea of philosophy in her verse. * Each verse has its own rythm in thougt and its effect in totality.

It is not the earthly verse but an outburst, gushing out of the depth of her soul where senses and mind vanish that void where mystics enter a trance. The gaze is thus deeply within (Antarmukhi)

अन्तर्मुखी दृष्टि निर्वाणरहस्य तती परमागति ।

In such a state of concentration there is the bliss of union with the Infinite. The translator has however taken pains to explain the subtle principle of Muladhara in these ten verses strewing the refrain for clarity and concentration. It will be no digression to say that the physical span of Rupa Bhawani's movement has not been beyond ten miles from Srinagar and its environs within the Hariparbat side of the Anchar Lake with its mountain amphitheatre with the Lar area where Shah Sadiq lived at a higher elevation. Rupa Bhawnai settled here for her meditation at Vaskur. The famous shrine of Rajni Devi at Tullamulla is situated in this area. Shankaracharya hill and the Mahadev Peak look over this region.

COMPARISON

It may not be fair to weigh words of Rupa Bhawani and compare these with other poets of Kashmiri. There being nothing very common in vocabulary, such an attempt will lead us nowhere. In thought, however, Rupa Bhawani states her Yogic preparation with that of Lal Ded. Accepting like Lal Ded the guidance of Guru before

*Rupa Bhawani—T. N. Dhar 1977

whom ego vaxes with divine logic, one attains the state of divine union. A close study of the Gita and the Vakkhs will reveal an identity of views. Here again Gita (iv, 46) be referred to for each shape of experience in the practice of Yoga. Well-versed with the Yogic technique of Lal Ded, Rupa Bhawani explains how unity of self with the supreme self required "Anugraha" to free the spirit off the shackles of matter. In this respect Rupa Bhawani does not go beyond the teachings of Gita.

पवित्रे नेत्रे पश्यत् मुखी अन्तर, बहु भू-डण्डी असंख्य कमो करत् ।
यिहोय राज यूगी दतपित सुय, सर्वकांक्षा सुअर्थ पूरणी
अन्तर मुखी दृष्टि निर्वाणरहस्य तती परमागती ।

Does this form the basis of her miracles? Well versed in Spand Shashtras as she was, it may not be easy to appreciate the verses that follow the verses of Ist canto. It requires spiritual intelligence to follow the Vakkhs in the second canto (113verses) in which the great union is propounded. Rupa Bhawani is above the experience of pleasure and pain. The translator has rightly remarked that "The truth of these utterances can be understood by developing inward vision through the practice of Yoga". The purpose of Yoga is summarised thus :-

सर्वत्र जगद्गुरु सेवान्त पूजनी एक

"World teacher, ever in service, worthy of infinite worship"

While going carefully through the words in Sanskrit and Kashmiri similar or identical sound close to each other in meaning, may appear, but no separate word in Kashmiri is either attempted to be searched or found. It is not the homophony of words, but the regular phonolgical correspondence of words, but the regular phonological correspondence of words and syllables indicating common roots.

Modern Kashmiri bears no resemblance with the language of Rupa Bhawani and no amount is worthwhile to make such an attempt. New words brought new life to this language and in keeping with the traditional cultural mingling the Kashmiri got enriched. Its vocabulary depending on its prefixes and suffixes enabled a new coinage of words. The sweetness of Kashmiri poetry is due to that mystical quality of individual coinage making it fit for poetry. There is no abuse of foreign words. They are set well in sound and meaning.

There is nothing beyond God in Rupa Bhawani's verse. And if life aims at aimless journey one wonders how in a mysterious wandering one can get peace of mind.

The third canto signifies perfection exclaiming "I am that great Brahman". Such verse, to be intelligible, needs grace of God(Anugraha). Since Samadhi comes in it so it becomes an exerise in yoga that for perfect to a degree far beyond is not within comprehension. *It appears that no effort is made by Rupa Bhawani to make herself intelligible to the non-sanskrit speaking people. Reason is not far to seek.Gushing out of wisdom in Sanskrit completely annihilates environmental consciousness which is an attempt at a low level to that of bliss of Heavenly peace, the domain of Supreme Brahman. "Greatest miracle of biological power is the development of speech in man which finally developed into power of writing," Very rightly remarked by Shri T. N. Dhar, at page 156.

Coming to the 4th canto of Vaakhas it ends the divine message being the last. Her spiritual quest is an open penance aiming at spiritual unity. Renunciation leaps to actual attainment. "Having nothing yet hath all" is often quoted. It applies to the teachings of Rupa Bhawani. To give up worldly pleasures for some time never means complete renounciation. It is a period of penance a sort of spiritual preparation aiming at purification of the devotee. She depends on wisdom enshrined in the Vedas to give up duality. Respecting tradition, custom and kinship, she only bridged the gulf with yoga. Samadhi she stresses, siddhi, skill, prosperity, gush out from the source. Personality is to be free from decay and death.

CONCLUSION.

Linguistically speaking Kashmiri appears not to have emerged as an accepted mixture of Sanskrit and Persian words as is proved to be later in the middle of the 19th Century. In the time of Rupa Bhawani whatever the reasons, the diction in her verse shows no synthesis of Sanskrit and Persian. Assimilation appears to have taken a long time as her verse is not even a half baked mingling of words

*Padap na beejam chaturbhuj-aakaram : page 158 Rupa Bhawani
—T. N. Dhar.

from Persian. It is not easy to erase her contribution to Kashmiri language. Had it not been for her rich verse (about 150 verses) to Kashmiri literature-"obscure and obsolete" verse as mentioned in haste by some critics—the poetess may have left little impression on Kashmiri. This is not to be forgotten that the verse of Rupa Bhawani is to be studies in isolation and not as an evolutionary wave in the synthisized current of Kashmiri. A recluse as she was her spiritual domain was a divine Kingdom of her own, unconcerned with the people around her.*

* *The present attempt is based on the work of Shri T. N. Dhar.*

A. N. R.

Mystic Trends in Kashmiri poetry

*Dr. Krishna Raina.**

'Ours is a great country. We have had for centuries a great history. The whole of the East reflects our culture. We have to represent what India taught right from the time of Mohenjo-Darro and Harappa times. These are the precious words of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. Kashmir is the most important part of this great country with a rich Geographical, histoiical, cultural and literary background. It is known as a famous seat of learning. Kalhana has given us the first chronological order of the kings of Kashmir and thus Rajtarangini is the first history of Kashmir written in 12th century.

Kashmir is supposed to be the originating centre of human culture, and it is popularly known as Paradise on earth. Kashmir is famous for its Pratyabhijnya system of Kashmir Shaivism which has given radical revisions of Indian Philosophy. Pratyabhijnya Philosophy is the main contribution of Kashmir Philosophy to Indian Philosophy. Shri Somananda was the originator of this philosophy and Utpaldeva, Abhinov Gupta and others were main expounders of this philosophy. Buddhism has also a long history in Kashmir. The great Buddhist council was held in Kanishka's time near Harwan known then as Kundala-Vana-Vihara. Kashmiri scholars have written much about Buddhism and have translated many works. Indian Literature without the contribution of Kashmir has a big gap. Kashmir has produced scholars of Sanskrit Kavya Shastra-Vamana, the founder of the Riti School and Udbhatta, the teacher of different thcries of Riti; Rudratta, Ananda Vardhana, Mamatta and Abhinavgupta, Kayyatta, Ruyyaka and Mahima Bhatta all were Kashmiris. Anand Vardhana is the founder of Dhvani school and Mammatta of Rasa school. Abhinavgupta's doctrine is that Rasadhvani is the soul

*Asst. Professor in Hindi, Himachal Uuiversity, Simla,

of Literature. Patanjali was also a Kashmiri. Thus Kashmir has given a lot to the Indian Poetics and Literature. Kashmir has produced many Sanskrit scholars and mystics of renown. The cultural life of Kashmir has had the impress of great mystics.

The main language of Kashmir is Kashmiri. It is said that it is a mixed language having as its basis a language of the Dard group of the Dardic family allied to Shina. It has powerfully been influenced by Indian culture and literature and the greater part of its vocabulary is now of Indian origin and it is allied to that of sanskritic-Indo-Aryan languages of Northern India. As, however, its basis—in other words its phonetic system, its accidence, its syntax, its prosody—is Dardic, it must be classed as such and not as a sanskritic form of speech (Grierson).

Kashmiri poetry begins with the works of great mystic poetess Lalleshwari of 14th century. Her Guru was Sidha Srikantha and she learnt yoga from him. Lal Ded propounded the yoga philosophy and high moral truths in Kashmiri verse. These are called Lala Wakh or sayings of Lal Ded. These sayings are the gems of Kashmiri poetry and true knowledge of yoga. These are deep and sublime. She had influence from Kashmir Shaivism and Shankaracharya's Advaita Philosophy. Lal Ded's God is Nirgunna. She wanted to make Shaivism easy for common man. She pursued yoga and became a wandering preacher. She says that one who thinks himself not different from the other; one who accepts sorrow as good as pleasure; one who frees himself from duality; he and he alone tells the beads of Lord of the Lords-Almighty and this is the basic thinking of Shaivism. She held a key to many mystic truths. The following stanza illustrates her deep mystic thought :-

"So my lamp of knowledge afar,
Fanned by slow breath from the throat of me,
They, my bright soul to my self revealed,
Winnowed I abroad my inner light,
And with darkness around me sealed,
Did I garner truth and hold Him tight."

(Translated by Sir Richard Temple)

Lal Ded thinks dissolution of 'self' (Aham) essential for Realisation. According to her Sadhaka has to reach that mental attitude where there is no difference between 'Him' and 'self'. She says one who considers his own self and others alike ends distinction between 'I' and 'you', who treats days and nights alike, who is above sorrows and pleasures, can only realize God in his ownself. According to her differentiation between the human soul and Divine-self was Zero. Lal Ded is the first woman mystic to preach medieval mysticism in Kashmiri poetry. She used metaphors, riddles and other mediums for her expressiou.

Like Lal Ded another mystic poet of Kashmiri language is Nunda Rishi, who is known as Sheikh Nui-ud-Din alias Sahajanand. His father, Salar Sanz was influenced by Sufi Saint Yasman Rishi, who arranged his marriage with Sadar Maji. The child of this couple, Nand Rishi is the great founder of Rishi line of Kashmir. Jonaraja refers him as Maha Nurdin—the chiefest guru of Muslims but the saint poet always refers to himself only as Nanda. He preached to subdue the five senses and control Kama, Krodha etc. He has given much importance to yogic practice—breath control for the communion with God. Nand Rishi favoured good action wich is the secret of happiness in the world. He preached a disciplined life like this:-

Desire is like the knotted wood of the forest
It can not be made into planks, beams or into cradles;
He who cut and felled it,
Will burn it into ashes.

He considered rosary as a snake and favourcd true worship—

Do not go to Sheikh and Priest and Mullah;
Do not feed the cattle or Arkh or leaves;
Do not shut thyself up in mosques or forests;
Enter thine own body with breath controlled in
communion with God.

Rupa Bhawani was the second great mystic poet of 15th century. She had a great and deep experience of ups and downs of life. The worldly sufferinges showed her the path of spiritual life. Her spiritual 'Guru' was her father who initiated har into the mysteries and

practices of yoga. She gave rich mystic poetry to Kashmir language. In her poetry there is the inflnence of both Kashmir Shaivism and Islamic Sufism.

'Selflessness is the sign of the selfless;
Bow down at the door of the selfless.
The selfless are of the highest authority-
The kings of the time and the wearers of the crest and crown.

These lines show her spiritual understanding. According to her dissolution of self is essential for Realisation. Rupabhawni was a great preacher of yoga. She describes her yogic practice. The different stages of 'yoga' and awakening of kundalini has been described in the simple language of common men:-

'I dashed down into the nether regions
and brought the vital breath up;
I got its clue out of earth and stones;
Then my Kundalini woke up with nada;
I drank wine by the mouth,
I got the vital breath gathered it within myself;

This great mystic poetess has experienced the truth and then explained the same. Such mystics had real experience and not bookish one. That is the reason why this mystic poetry in every lauguage is considered great after so many centuries.

Pt. Mirzakak of eighteenth century was a great mystic poet of Kashmir. I have seen three manucripts of this poet at Hangalgund which is 13 miles away from tourist resort, Kukurnag. There are some super natural stories also related to great poet of the land. According to Mirzakak 'Brahma' is one and invisible. He is the aim of 'Pran'. According to him 'He' is 'Ram' 'Shayam' and everything. 'His' abode is universe—

Tas naav shyama sundar,
Ghara chhus zaagi andar,
Nebar naav voochhi zi andar,
Bhajan naam Ram Ramay.

'Self' and 'Praan' both are 'Barhma'. He creates, nourishes and then becomes Rudra—

Praan Brahma laagith paida chum Sukaran.
Praan vishnu laagith rachan dam ba dam Ram Ram.
Praanay sodur laagith soruy chum galan
Pran haastoneste pran bood Nabood dam ba dam Ramay.
(Manuscript)

We can find our goal with 'Omkar'. Mirzakak has given a fine metapher that Omkar is arrow, worldly man is bow and our target is Brahma—

Om gav kamanay
Jeev jaan teeray
Nishana Brahma—
Om is real man, Om is the light. It is past, present and future.
It is the God of Gods—
Om gav aadi purush

Nathan kund so naathye (Manuscript). Much importance has been given to Guru and Pranav Yoga by Mirzakak. His words are like the great poet of India Tulsidas when he says these words—

Karma sheer tay jung jagraath,
Sadh sangh thanya mandsay,
Jaanan gayave mushak vignas Rab sabib prabhu ji, (Manuscript)

Mysticism is in broder sense as old as man but it is with man in this scienfific century also. Pandit Zinda Koul is known as 'master ji' in Kashmir. His school is that of Lal Ded, Rupabhawi and Mirzakak. According to shri B. B. Kachru he is a mystic by temperament and naturally he could not stand the 'material fret' of his own generations. He sharpened his intellect to reflect the knowledge of truth and dialectical doctrine of Vedanta. Although mysticism was out of tune in the age of 'Master Ji' but the mystic approach is present in his poems. He believes in 'Karma' theory and yearns for salvation. Human salvation is more in the hands of man than in the hands of God. According to Master Ji God is besides oneself.

He unknown and unseen.
Quietly listens, sitting by.

This is the basic idea of a mystic - who believes in oneness. The poet wants to search 'Him' in another spiritual world—

Where all have a living faith in God—
One loving Father, Lord of all—
Where ghosts, given and spirirs dark.
Hold no sway over men's mind.

For Master Ji God is Love and he wants to understand the world through the lover's eye. In 'Hymn to Love' poem he describes—

O Remover of world's darkness.
Thou art the source of light and withal my own true self.
Let me see thee shine in all these modes.
Initiate me into the philosophy of at-onement.
Remove from me this duality.

For the poet like Sumitranandan Pant change is the process of life. Sorrows and happiness are the two sides of this life coin. End is the beginning of new. In his poem 'Ah this world' Master Ji says that one things gives monotonous atmosphere in life, therfore, dark and light are natrual and important—

If the Lord, had not made Death,
If the hell of life were to continue,
Providence would not deserve our thanks-
We should overwhelm it with complaint.

For Master Ji the power in man is nothing but 'His' Shakti.' One can only face the ups and downs of this world with the grace of God. We get 'prerna' from that eternal truth which is Supreme. Man is always longing for something unknown but that noble self is manifest in man's ownself longing for unknown creates mystic attitude for ages.

The Social Set-up of Kashmiri Pandits In India

P. N. Walie★

In 1968, I had an occassion to be associated with a Swamiji in Chandigarh. He had spent forty years in the valley. He was eighty five and of Shankracharya Sect. Radiating a robust health, he had remarkable mental agility and speed in action. His face which was pink looked all the more radiant because of following snow-white beard and hair that reached his shoulders. Spirituality or no spirituality, his very bodily features were enough to draw attention of those who even passed by him. So when he spoke, people listened. What he said about Kashmiri Brahmins passed for authenticity.

By virtue of his long stay in the valley, he had developed an affinity with Kashmiri Pandits. He would even join the meetings of Kashmiri Pandits' association, when I was its General Secretary. Once addressing a Kashmiri Pandits congregation, he remarked, "I am of a firm opinion that whereas Guru Nanak looks after Sikhs in which-ever foreign country they happen to be: Shiva, the lord of intellect, education, art, sciences and conjungal happiness looks after Kashmiri Brahmins wherever they are in India and abroad. They are being guided by Shiva everywhere whether they acknowledge this fact or not. I have an evidence to prove my point regarding Shiva's grace to Kashmiri Brahmins. In the wake of 1947 raid, I went round the places which fell to raider's vandalism, in order to find out the state of Shivalings in God-forsaken places. Not a single Shivaling was dismantled".

This statement put me to thinking, and Lo! Among seventy odd men audience I counted eleven who drew four figure salary; ten who were gazetted officers; twenty owned houses in Chandigarh (now there are about forty.) Out of seventy men about fifty were graduates

★ Major P. N. Walie (Retd) 2068—Sector—21—C, Chandigarh.

and above. Most of them had come away from the valley after 1947 raid. With heart within and God overhead, they had made room for themselves in a different world outside their own.

When speaking rationally, we do not take cover under religous hypothesis but when reality is taken into consideration, one is amazed while pondering over such statistics. Here I shall refer to 'Illustrated Weekly of India', which, about seven years ago, brought out a feature pertaining to the Kashmiri Brahmins of India. Its statistics showed that this section of Indian Society from Kashmir to Kerala and Gujrat to Assam consists of only one Lakh and fifty thousand men, women and children. But in proporation to this number this sub-clan of Brahmins produced two Prime Ministers, two cabinet ministers, one chief-justice of India, two general secretaries of parliament, one chief election commi-ssioner and four generals ! Disproportionate to its population are high-ranking civilian and military officers, diplomats, doctors, engineers, scientists, famous actors, businessmen, men of letters, university teachers judges etc. etc. When I was in active service, the Kashmiri Pandit Officers in the Indian army, after independence, outnumbered the Kashmiri jawans therein. If attainment of positions of any section of Indian society has any bearing on its social set-up then the Kashmiri Pandits in relation to their numerical strength are far ahead as a social group in our country.

Scattered all over India and abroad in small groups they have organised exclusive cultural associations. They publish their own magazines. Observe typical Kashmiri festivals. Hold biradiri elections. Celebrate pleasures of one another and share the pain of the unfor-tunate among them, wherever they happen to be outside the valley. Even the last solar eclipse which turned out to be a scientific fan-fare throughout the world threw up the name of Kashmiri astronomer since dead. The fanfare of first Indian Sputnik 'Aryabhatta' leads one to realize as to why Kashmiri Pandit, in the valley was, and is, called 'Bhatta'.

Under dispassionate analysis, this reality cannot be relegated to mere co-incidence because this social position in relation to this microscopic section of Indian society with its typical identity has been more or less constant. It was about half a century ago, when as a boy, I read Late Shri Anand Koul Bambzai's 'The Kashmiri Pandit'. I marvelled at the fact

that those of Kashmiris who fled the valley as refugees under various pressures, two or three centuries ago and settled in the plains, had made enviable positions for themselves. Less then five thousand paior to indepenance these handful of people had produced men of national stature, out of sheer merit and became the very elite of Indian society. Under British rule they earned the status of being the blue eyed boys of the 'Raj'. In administration, under British rule there emerged in the plains Kashmiri Pandits of Knighthood, Rai Bahadurs, Rajas, Rai Sahibs, men of I. C. S. cadre,famous lawyers, professors of repute, scholars, writers and poets. In education and refinement, they were an aristocratic class by themseleves. In the field af national politics this negligible society threw up the people of the highest social stature like the Nahrus, Saprus, Katjus, Kinzus; and other dignitaries during forty year's time span. In Lahore, Delhi, Jaipur, capitals of the then princely states, Lucknow, Allahabad, Calcutta and large towns of the then Central India, Kashmiri Pandit was recognised as a man of substance and respectability. Yet he retained his identity. It is because of that we to-day distinguish him from the rest and attempt to analyse his intrinsic powers to rise among crores of Indian masses above the level of the average in his social set-up.

So if this trait of Kashmiri Pandit to emerge despite political social and financiol handicaps in land outside his own appears to be a constant factor then there is indeed some unique quality in this sub-clan just as there is God given fair complexion and bodily features. Otherwise how in such a hotch-potch of religions, castes languages, cultures, economic disparities, illiteracy and other myriads of disabilities prevalent everywhere in the plains, this Kashmiri Brahmin is making his presence felt now as before? To find the reason, I have to go back to the the times of Martand Ruins.

Archaeology has ceased to be a boring subject for all those whose hobby happens to be general reading even regardless of any special interest in history. From archaeological findings lavmen enjoy co-relating affairs of their heritage with what they are at present. So the discovery that Martand Relics are five thousand years old a discerning Kashmiri Pandit straight away connects this Circa to his traditional calender called in Kashmiri as "Nich-Patri". It shows along with Christirin Era,

Vikrami Era, Saka Era, the current year as 5056. A Kashmiri Pandit, therefore, is justified in the assertion that his social and cultural age is consistently and persistently as old as the Martand Ruins. Our 'Nich Patris' have been brought out all along the ancient times down to the present day without a break. "The Sapta Rishi Samvat" of 5056 years that appeared to a layman as an astral era has manifested in the background of archaeologicol research a different meaning in the terms of Kashmiri Pandits' culture and their whole social standing. Thus, he can examine this fact under the much condemned (and justifiably so, Hitlerence theories and analysis of races. In that cult a pure Aryan has God - given attributes commensurate with geographical and biological factors. This valley of Kashmir of temperate zone, eighty miles in length and twenty - three in breadth is peopled by a race which is pure Aryan, not in mere aspects of natives, physique but instinctive behaviour. In the whole of Asia only this area, covered on all sides by majestic ranges of Himalayas, has sustained this purity of Aryan of creativity and initiative. Historically, morally and politically, we are all strongly averse to the claim of racial superiority. But realistically speak-ing we cannot deny under any pretext that the western world, whose achievements we envy and whose way of life we strive to follow, has been the leader in the progerss of making and is currently regardless of our spite. There appears to be no time in the foreseeable future when the process may reverse. Even Japan is the Japan we admire because for the last hundred years and more she has gone the western way by her own efforts to follow in the foot-steps of Europe and United States where the pure Aryan abounds.

One of the foremost qualities of the aforesaid race is the inita-tive in its intrinsic ability to turn to its use available resources by its own genius under any evironment, hostile or favourable.

Under this analysis, we take into account the people who lived in the valley of 80 miles by 23 miles in a geographical set-up that made communication with the outer world extremely difficult two or three centuries before and almost impossible in the B. C. Era. This state of being cut off and what the avarage Kashmiri did on his own, within his available resources and by his own genius to live with it

proves exclusive characteristics to survive and retain his identity. This becomes all the more pronounced when other classes of Indian society placed in similar conditions and with available natural resources have not been able to turn them to their own use, on their own initiative. When reference is to an average Kashmiri in relation to an average individual of other parts of India, it excludes those who have privileges of birth, economic well-being, education or any other social distinction. Normally it is a man in the street and a representative sample of millions of illiterate people whose economic condition precludes any special feature in cultural fields.

Here in the valley, right from copper age, the average man has on his own, shown creative instincts, productivity, originality and adaptability. The exploitation of wood, the indigenous water transportation devised so as to take advantage of gently flowing rivers, the crafts, handi-work, weaving, floating vegetable gardens, boat-craft such as 'Doon-gas', 'Khachus' (later house-boats), pottery innovations, the 'Kangri' the type of cooking hearth (Daan), foot wear out of hay, warmth generating fuel out of tree leaves, all have the stamp of creativity and adaptdbility. And most important of all is the fact that these items are out of available local natural resources.

Even in the art of house - building Kashmir had devised special aspect of construction which is exclusviely his own and this had been profusely praised by construction experts because such construction had outstanding features of adaptality to extreme cold and earthquake-prone conditions of the valley. Surprisigly the cost was less in relation to durability. For all this type of exclusive requirement of life in the valley since ancient times, it has generally been the genius and the initiative of the average man that has produced the results which are tenable even today despite mechanical life that has overwhelmed countries all around the world.

The foregoing is just an illustration to prove the point that a Kashmiri pandit being a pure Aryan has an edge over others who do have availble to themselves the natural resources which, if exploited on their own as did the Kashmiri, would have definitely raised them the level of backward sections of society about which we read and hear

day in and day out through the media. I have had the opportuuity to assess the quality of the average man in many other parts of India in comparison with average Kashmiri by virtue of my All India Service. This quality of adaptability, creativity and exploitation of resources and situations towards his own good has come in good stead for a Kashmiri Pandit. This is an intrinsic trait. This has been the product of biological and geographical conditions obtaining in the valley over the centuries.

Besides, the Kashmiri Pandit has a psychology which has been nurtured by his religious beliefs of exclusive ritualism. As education and the effects of envirenments mould the character of an individual so do the religous beliefs shape and formulate a collective behaviour of a section of people which we term as its cultural. So in the religious aspect of Kashmiri Pandit's life, a reference is necessary to substantiate this argument. To a Kashmiri Brahmin upto eleventh century A. D. the reality that Vedas were transmitted over 5000 years by 'Shruti' and 'Samriti' from mouth to mouth must have been an inconvenient process. He therefore, applied his quality of adaptability to this aspect of his life. Pandit Vasukura. the Kashmiri Brahmin was, thus the first individual who reduced the Vedas to writing. In evidence of this statement, I refer to para 2 of page 2 of a treatise on "Vedic India" by Louis Renou, the French scholar of Paris University as translated by Philip Spratt in 1957. Apart from this documentary authority I have my personal experience right since my boyhood to have perceived that our religious rites were elaborate and always in the medium of Sanskrit accompanied by manifold symbolisms, figures, diagrams, mud improvisations, rice-balls, Kusha grass, copperware, limastone, barley and various techniques like, the "Shokh-ta Punshun" at the time of births. Earlier the whole of this was a 'tamasha' for me but after going through the above named French scholar's work of research in Vedas, I am convicned that Kashmiri Brahmin was meticulous in performance of religious ceremonies. Such process was common in every household and was precisely as laid down in Rig-Veda five thousand years ago. But elesewhere during my forty-five years in plains, I have not witnessed such festidiousness in performance at the function of any non-Kashmiri Brahmin. Even in the process of "Lagna" at the marriage functions the Kashmiri Pandits' technique excels; i.e. the birde and the bridegroom

hold each others hands both together go round the fire whereas non-Kashmiris tie the bride to bridegroom's dhoti who takes her round as an appendage. In Kashmiri Pandits procedure bridegroom and bride moving around fine, hand in hand, appear as equal partners in the journey of life. In the other case the girl is a mere follower with no status of equality in participation of life together.

Besides this aspect, I have had the opportunity to be in almost all British-time provinces of India which include Pakistan and Bangla-desh. I worked in Army Ordnance Depots such as the one in Srinagar called Badami Bagh Depot. In those depots throughout India, local civilian labour (average Indians) is employed. From the collective observ-ance of religious function of those average civilians in the country, I have been able to note that whereas Hindus of particular state or region celebrate festivals exclusive to them only, we Kashmiri Brahmins in the valley recognise and celebrate all these put together. I illustrate this point by the mention that in Maharashtra the greatest religious exclu-sive festival is the fortnight of Lord Ganesha. We also celebrate 'Ganesh Cheturdashi' and a fair is held at 'Ganpath Yar'. In deep south Maha-Shivratri is observed among wider range of Hindu community. Kashmiri Pandit does it over a number of days. In Bengal, Durga Puja or worship of Maha Kali is an exclusive annual feature. We also perform Durga Ashtami 'Havans' during the same period and observe Maha Kali day in December every year. Janma Ashtami, Navratra and Dussehra being most widely celebrated in Karnatka, U. P. Rajasthan, Puujab, Haryana and H. P; in Kashmir these are the festivals of equal importance. Brahmin's New Year Day in the south is the same as our 'Navreh'. Nag Panchmi, a snake worship is in vogue in Central India; we observe 'Ananta Chodah'. Baisakhi is celebrated in Hindi Belt but not in the South. It is a festival in Kashmir. In certain parts of U. P. and Bihar, 'Khichari' festival coicncides with our 'Kicha Mavas'. In Assam region, worship of 'Ghar Devta' is common and we also perform puja and offer rice and raw fish to 'Yach' during the same month. In Jabalpore and Andhra where female labour is employed by Ordnance Depots, leave is obtained by Hindu women because of the fast of 'Chandan Shisti'. Kashmiri Pandit ladies observe this occassion at a mass scale. Diwali is common everywhere as in Kashmir. In Kerala

the thread ceremany is a lengthy affair with the connected 'havan'. It is as elaborate a performance in Kashmir. In 'Shradha' functions rice-made 'Mool Purusha' other than 'Pindas' is a common sight in deep South and the same is the feature of a Kashmiri 'Shradha'. In Eastern U. P. 'Chandika hawans' are just like ours in Kashmir. Despite having highest percentage of educted members, Kashmiri Pandit sub-clan is the most ritualistic among all the classes of Hindus, I have had occasion to study in different parts of India in relation to our religious life. All religious proceedings and temple recitations of Kashmiri Pandits are wittingly or unwittingly still in Sanskrit even though we seldom studied Hindi or Sanskrit as a subject in Schools.

With all the above mentioned religious background the Kashmiri Pandit is secular by disposition and is respected for this trait by other non-Hindu communities in the rest of India. The Muslim surnames are an evidence substantiating non-fanatical attitude of this community. I am both a "Pandit" as well as 'wali' and there are Kashmiri Pandits in India whose surnames are Mullas, Sultans, Mirzas, Durranis and Qazis. They have not changed in 'Kauls or 'Dhars so far! There is no feeling of embarassment whatever even though in the other parts of India than Kashmir such names exclusively identify Muslims.

In the light of all this, Kashmiri Pandits settled in plains after 1947 or earlier are, to my personal satisfaction in this regard, above average, economically and educationally with high sense of hospitality and intellectual disposition when compared with Indian masses in any part of the country and are proud of thier heritage. Their power of competition under odds in the various walks of life which are peculiar to Kashmiris such as services of sort professions based on education, modern sciences and technology, is of very high potentiality. Normally Kashmiri Pandits calculating mind which over-rules emotion at the time of scoring over others, is a determining factor in his struggle for servival especially in places and societies where he has landed outside his own state.

In this context, the social set-up of Kashmiri Pandits in India has now manifested a new pattern. There are easily distinguishable two groups of this sub-clan, difference between them has become

pronounced because after 1947 a large number of Kashmiri Pandits left the valley and settled elesewhere in India. Almost all of the present generation of Kashmiri Pandits whose fore-fathers have permanently settled in planis over last century or so, do not speak Kashmiri even though they retain much of Kashmiri culture. They speak, Urdu or Hindustani regardless of the local languages of an Indian State in which they happen to live and thrive. They seldom arrange inter-cast marriages, even though recently settled Kashmiri Pandits do without inhibitions even intercommunity weddings. This class of Kashmiri Pandits normally find matches for boys and girls among the biradari scattered over various states. They arrange matches in towns and cities hundreds of miles away from Boy's or girl's home. But the culture, tradition, religious functions, mode of marriages are uniform despite being in different states and far away towns— of course other socialities conform to those prevalent among the class who have settled in plains after 1947. But these are drastically curtailed. In this respect also I have opportunity to study this sub-clan of a sub clan at their close quarters because I married in 1946 in a family of Kashmiri Pandits who had settled in Lahore, a hundred and fifty years earlier. All relatives on my wife's side and that of my daughter-in-law belong to this social group. So they refer to Kashmiri Pandits who have recently come away from the valley and speak Kashmiri as "Taza Kashmiri" whilst the latter call them 'Purane Kashmiri. For convenience sake I have coined my own nomenclature. I demarcate the members of either group as 'Typicals' and 'Non-typicals'.. This terminology has been catching up since 1946 as it has obviated confusion in reference. I call a Kashmiri Pandit 'Typical' if he speaks Kashmiri. Those who have settled in earlier times and do not speak Kashmiri, I idnentify them as 'Non-typical'. My family, therefore, has a composite culture, Typical and Non-Typical put together !

My personal knowledge based on my relationship with this sub-clan of a sub clan is that those who are highly placed are more or less cosmopoliton, but in many ways have affinity with a Kashmiri Pandit as in early days. In British India it was this tendency to help fellow Kashmiri Pandit that benefited this class by creating social net-work

consistently for about a century. If an uncle in Kanpur held a key position he would see that his nephew in Rawalpindi availed benefit of his being a relative. And this sort of help members of this social group gave to one another regardless of relationship also contributed to their sustenance as a class as well as to their emergence af a privileged social entity in British time. The British rulers were susceptible to their in-born abilities and mastery over English language.

At this present juncture, this social group has three stratas. The first strata has already been referred to. The middle one has retained the family tradition and a cult of ancestors which are somewhat unlike that of a typical Kashmiri. The lowest strata is not distinct, except that it speaks Hindustani or Urdu and the women do not, unlike typical Kashmiri wear Punjabi dresses or that of other states. All the three stratas have no compulsions to stick to certain avoidable formalities as typicals do, which include the art of presentation of hospitality. Against this, the typical Kashmiri copies Punjabis in dowary, dress, other things and above all arranges inter-caste marriages. Among non-typical Kashmiris, inter community or inter-caste marriages, are only the result of a boy or a girl having fallen for a boy or a girl of other community. Parents or relatives do not as a rule arrange such marriages. Even in food habits, they have a creed of their own, which is different from that of typical Kashmiri, a Punjabi or natives of other states where they live. But on comparison with typical Kashmiris who have recently settled in plains the non-typicals of middle and lower starta appear, these days, to lack lustre in many fields of competitive life and education.

All said and done, this whole idea of a microscopic distinct class as Kashmiri Pandits in India can sustain its social individuality with its God given attributes in case it retains by effort, its culture as well as purity of blood. If that is to be an aim, inter-caste or inter-community marriages merrily arranged by typical Kashmiri parents work counter to it. A sub - clan of a lakh or two numerical strenght among 70 crore people of Indian Society does not take long to disappear as a group of a disinct set - up. At the present speed, the inter-caste or inter-community marriages accelerated by the compulsions

of irrational and bad dowry and marriage customs of the typicals as well as love affairs of non-typicals, the social identitly of Kashmiri Pandits in India will be gone and forgotten, if not now, but here-after.

The reader may justifiably observe that I have chanted only the beauties of the good, of the social set-up of the Kashmiri Pandits in India and not barked against the bad; like a pianist, I have only touched the keys that made my tune and have ignored the rest.

FUNDAMENTAL ASPECT OF

VEDANTA AND KASHMIR SHAIVISM

(A comparative view of the two Philosophies)

Jankinath Kaul "Kamal"★

The six systems of Hindu Philosophy are Nyaya, Vaisheshika Saankhya, Yoga, Mimaamsa and Vedanta. There are also many other schools of thought in India, but all are the variations of these six systems termed the Hindu Philosophy. To understand this clearly, we have to reallze that the basis of all the schools of Indian Thought is the same which we call the Ultimate Reality, Supreme Consciousness, Brahman, Siva, Allah or God. All these schools of thought conclude on several common concepts which are :-

i) All accept the central cycle of Nature, which is without beginning or end. This consists of vast phases of Creation, Sustenance and Dissolution.

ii) All accept that life and death are but two phases of a single cycle to which the soul is bound. This is because of the ignorance of the true nature of things.

iii) All accept Dharma as the moral law of the universe that accounts for these central cycles of Nature, as well as the destiny of the human soul.

iv) All agree that knowledge of the self is the path to freedom and that Yoga is the method to attain final liberation.

All the schools of thought are, thus, but the fundamental interpretations of the Ultimate Reality. They are so inter-related that the hypothesis and the method of each is dependent upon that of the other. They are, in no way, contradictory to one another, as they all lead to the same practical end, the knowledge of Reality and liberation of soul.

★Research Officer. Shri Parmananda Research Institute. Sgr.

"अनिष्टनिवृत्तिः परमानन्दप्राप्तिः"

anishtha-nivrittih paramaananda praaptih

'To get rid of evil and to attain permanent and supreme bliss', is the innate desire of every creature in the world.

Here an attempt is made to study a comparative view of the two schools of Indian thought, namely the Advaita Vedanta of Shankara and the Kashmir Shaivism, as these have great affinities with one another. Both advocate monism. Fundamentally, they have a single conception, but each develops it individually to suit particular minds. The physical reason for their individual development, apart from that of the mental, may be due to Historical background and Geographical situation of each.

Badarayana, probably, founded Vedanta in the plains od India while Durvasa expounded Trika Shaiva in the Himalayan ranges, the two being sobre and sentimental respectively. Vadanta is an enquiry into the nature of the Ultimate Reality while Shaivism discusses the nature of this ultimate Reality and explains the cause of the initial impulse in nature. The sources of Vedanta are Vedas and those of Shaivism are the Tantras, which give supplementary explanations to Vedic thought. Both are said to be of divine authorship. No doubt, they are the revelations favoured to great sages and seers of this ancient land. But neither objects the postulates of either of these.

Both of these evolved philosophies seem to have had prevailed in this beautiful land of Kashmir since the very early times i.e. the first century A. D. or earlier. This is evident from a keen observation of the performances of daily and occasional rites and rituals by the Kashmiri Pandits even upto this day. Hymns from the Vedas and recitations from the Tantras are included in all kinds of such performances, simultaneously. Even later hymns like Mukundamala—a hymn to Lord Vishnu, and Sivamahimnastotram—a hymn to Lord Siva—the supreme deities of the two philosophies, are recited and worship offered simultaneously by devotees in traditional way. By this we understand that people in this land of Kashyapa have from the very early times been accommodating perhaps because of their gift of intelligence from Nature. They always assimilated what came their way. According to Dr. Aurel Stien,[1] the Brahmins absorbed Buddhist Faith and lived in harmony

with their brethren who were converted to this faith in the valley. Thus, the old religion here seems to have been polytheistic, of course, with special inclination towards ritualistic Shaivism.

Kula system of Shaivism, advocating the highest form of Siva had been introduced here in the fourth century A. D. Krama system of Shaivism, connected with Raja-Yoga and Kundalini Yoga, which strees that vital air and mind are interdependent, also had been introduced here early.

Then, Sankaracharya (788-820 A. D.) visited this valley in the first two decades of the ninth century. He only re-established the true faith of Upanishads called the Vedantas. To check further deterioration caused by the split in Buddhism, he explained the Upanishads in a system on the basis of Brahma Sutras in its commentary. He gave Vedanta Philosophy the right footing when he wrote his valuable commentaries on the ten principal Upanishads and the Bhagwadgita. He composed a number of hymns to different deities like Saraswati, Krishna, Skanda and so on, to give the unilateral direction to multifarious faiths in the whole country. He gave practical instructions that worship of different deities leads to the same goal, the Ultimate Truth on realization.

In his hymn to Dakshinamurti, Sankara's conception of the ultimate reality is the same as that of Pratyabhijna, re-introduced by Somananda and Utpalacharya, in Kashmir. To examine a comparison, let us study the following :

बीजस्यान्तरिवाङ्कुरो जगदिदं प्राङ्निर्विकल्पं पुन-
र्मायाकल्पितदेशकालकलना वैचित्र्यचित्रीकृतम् ।
मायावीव विजृम्भयत्यपि महायोगीव यः स्वेच्छया
तस्मै श्रीगुरुमूर्तये नम इदं श्रीदक्षिणामूर्तये ॥

— दक्षिणामूर्तिस्तोत्र २

beejasyanterivaankuroo jagadidam praagnirvikalpam punah
maayaakalpitadeshakaalakalanaa vaichitryachitreekritam,
maayaveeva vijrembhayatyapi mahaayogiva yah swechchhayaa
tasmai shree gurumurtaye nama idam shree Dakshinaamurtaye. 2 (a)

"He, in whom this universe, prior to its projection was potentially present like a tree in a seed, and by whom it was wrought to its multiform by the magic, as it were, of His own will or in the manner of a great Yogi out of His own power, to that Supreme Being, embodied in the auspicious and benign Guru, I offer my profound salutation."

And

चिदात्मैव हि देवोऽन्तस्थितं इच्छावशाद्बहिः ।
योगीव निरुपादानमर्थजातं प्रकाशयेत् ।।
ईश्वरप्रत्यभिज्ञाविमर्शिनी १–५–७

chidaatmaiva hi devontasthitam icchaavashaad bahih,
yogeeva nirupaadaanam arthajaatam prakaashayet.3(a)

"By His own will the Supreme Lord, the essence of Knowledge (Supreme Consciousness) projects causelessly like the Yogi into this multiformal world."

Again, in the first stanza of the Dakshinamurti Stotra, Sankara says—

विश्वंदर्पणादृश्यमाननगरीतुल्यं निजान्तर्गतम् ।
पश्यन्नात्मनि मायया वहिरिवोद्भूतं यथा निद्रया ।।
दक्षिणामूर्तिस्तोत्रम् १/१

vishvam darpana drashyamaana nagari tulyam nijaantargatam
pashayannaatmani maayayaa bahirivodbhutam ythaa nidrayaa.2(a)

which means—"Who, by Maya as by dreem, sees Himself the universe which is inside Him, like unto a city that appears in a mirror, (but) which is manifested as if without." In the commentary to this stanza in his book entitled 'The Hymns Of Sankara', Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan points out—"It is to be noted that in this hymn Sankara employs certain key-terms and concepts of the Pratyabhijna system known popularly as Kashmir Shaivism. The illustration of the mirrored city is found in the pratyabhijna works".[4] Thus the people of Kashmir seem to have been influenced by the Vedanta Philosophy of Sankara as well as by the ancient Shaivism which later developed into Kashmir Shaivism.

Earlier two great Shaiva families of Sangamaditya and Atrigupta[5] had migrated into Kashmir, when King Lalitaditya (699-736 A. D.) ruled here. They practised Tantric Shaiva rituals. These had already influenced the thought of people here when 'Shankara's Tantric Philisophy spread and influenced the Trika also. This leads us to think that Shankara must have had personal touch with some founder-writers here. To illucidate this we quote the following passage from the book entitled 'Abhinavagupta—An Historical & Philosophical Study' by Prof. Dr. K. C. Pandey :-

"On the authority of the Rajatarangini (Ch. V, 66) we know that Bhatta Kallata, the pupil of Vasugupta, was a contemporary of Avantivarman, King of Kashmir (855-883 A.D). There he is referred to as 'Siddha.' It is, therefore, evident that at that time he was an old man of established reputation. Vasugupta, the teacher of Kallata, therefore, it is natural to suppose, belonged to the preceding scholastic generation extending from about 825 to 850 A. D. We shall, therefore, not be wrong if we say that Vasugupta gave a systematic form to the philosophical ideas of the monistic Tantras in his Siva Sutras in the next decade after Shankaracharya's visit to Kashmir towards the end of the second decade of the 9th century A. D,"[6]—(Page 154)

Thus, the mixed faith that the people of Kashmir had professed so for developed into a philosophical system when Vasugupta and Somananda gave Spanda and Pratyabhijna thoughts during the middle and latter part of the 9th century respectively. The Trika system of philosophy which had appeared on this earth through Durvasa, was in this way re-introduced by Siva's will, for the welfare and spiritual development of the people of Kaliyuga. Srimat Swami Lakshman Joo, in one of his lectures on Kashmir Shaivism says, "Like Vedanta, this system endeavours to remove the innate ignorance that separates the individual from the universal."[7]

Then, what are the points of difference between these two established philosophies?

There is no difference so far as the aim of both is concerned. Both the monistic philosophies aim at the realization of the Ultimate

Reality, which one calls Parabrahman and the other calls Parama Siva. So Paramasiva or Parameshwara is that ultimate Reality, which the Vedas declare as "This world came out from the Eternal Existence which is one, the only and without the second"

सदेव सौम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाऽद्वितीयम्—छा० उ० ६-२-१

Sadeva Saumyedamagra-aseet ekamevaadviteeyam.[8]

But there are points of difference in so far as their composition is concerned. On the basis of Sankhya, the two philosophies hold that the universe comprises of tattwas (or categories).

Twenty-three are common in both :-

Five Bhutas—(Elements)

Five Jnanendriyas (Organs of cognition)

Five Karmendriyas (Organs of action)

Five Tanmatras (subtle elements)

Three—Antahkaranas (internal organs)-Mind, Intellect & Ego.

The points of difference are :-

i) In Vedanta the twenty-fourth category is Prakriti and the twenty-fifth is the Purusha, which is known as the Supreme Being (Parameshwara). He is ever pure and is not tainted with the stain of worldly corruption, just as no amount of dirt can ever, alter the chemical purity of gold in a gold ring. Therefore, soul or self in Vedanta means the universal Soul, Paramatman or Supreme Spirit. This is identified with Purusha, the efficient cause of the manifest world. It brings all change by its mere presence as the sun brings forth the spring flowers.

Trika, on the other hand, adds thirteen more tattwas to the twenty-three of Sankhya. These are :-

Prakriti—the world of difference which has the quality of being affected,

Purusha—the limited individual,

Six Kanchukas or sheaths.- They are the limiting adjuncts on the individual in respect of कला space, विद्या Knowledge, राग interest, काल time and नियति authorship.

So far this is all अशुद्धविद्या impure knowledge.

Five more tattwas are considered to be in the field of Pure-knowledge शुद्ध विद्या. These are the five energies of Parama Siva called consciousness चित् bliss आनन्द desire इच्छा knowledge ज्ञान and Action क्रिया. Kashmir Shaivism postulates the single reality of Siva with two aspects—one Transcendental and the other Immanent like two sides of one and the same coin. The first is beyond manifestation. But both are real as the effect cannot be different from the cause. It is said :-

शिव एव गृहीत पशुभाव: —परमार्थसार श्लो० ५

'*Shiva eva graheeta pashubhavah*' *3 (b)*

'Verily Siva has assumed this form of duality'.

ii) Vedanta discusses the relationship of God, Matter and World (ईश्वर, जीव, जगत्). The central theme of the Vedanta Sutras is the philosophical teachings of the Upanishads, which concern the nature of these three relative principles. This includes the relation between the universal soul and the individual soul. Shankaracharya explained, for the practical purposes, this union in his monumental commentaries in the 8th century A. D.

The system of Kashmir Shaivism deals with the three-fold principle of God, Soul and Matter (शिव, नर, शक्ति), which gives it the name Trika (त्रिक). Vasugupata (9th century A. D.) received the Siva-Sutras by inspiration and explained these to preserve for man the principle of monism which existed in the Tantras, also known as Agamas. This revived an understanding of truth in its ultimate form.

iii) In Vedanta, Maya, is a means of operation. It is not a substance. It is the force which creates illusion of non-perception in nature. It is the dividing force or we may call it the finitising energy which creates form in the formless. The world is known as Maya because it has no reality. It is only an appearance of fleeting forms. The real is never affected by the unreal as the ground is never made wet by a mirage. Maya is ignorance (avidya-अविद्या) when it operates the individual mind. It vanishes when the knowledge of reality dawns just as the morning mist dissipates on rising of the sun.

In Kashmir Shaivism Maya is the power of contraction of the five universal modes of consciousness, called the Kanchukas or sheaths. The power of contraction works thus :-

Eternal Existance (नित्यता) contracts into time (अनित्यता)

All-pervasiveness (सर्वव्यापकता) contracts into Space (नियति)

All-completeness (पूर्णता) contracts into desire (अपूर्णता)

All-knowledge (सर्वज्ञता) contracts into limited knowledge (अल्पज्ञता)

and, All-powerfulness (सर्वकर्तृता) contracts into limited power (अल्पकर्तृता)

Maya-shakti, as it is called here, produces Purusha and Prakriti which together establish the dual world of mind and matter. Here it is termed Maya-Granthi, as it becomes the cause of bondage. As undivided power of Siva, Maya is not separate from the reality either. As the gross power of consciousness it is called. Maya-Shakti, which grants liberation to the contracted soul. The influence of Maya is evident in the law of Nature. Every period of action is followed by a period of rest just as sleep follows action.

iv) In Vedanta we are required to pass through the four-fold discipline which consists of :-

viveka—Discrimination

vairagya—Dispassion

shat-sampat—Right conduct (six-fold) :- a) Mental quietness; b) Taming the mind; c) Abstinence; d) Endurance; e) Confidence; and f) Steadiness.

mumukshutwa—Desite for liberation.

(Tattwabodha of 'Shankaracharya) 2(b)

There are also three kinds of students who advance towards self-realization. They are those :-

i) who act with zeal and faith,

ii) who act for the good of humanity,

iii) who are immersed in meditation.

But in Shaivism it is said-

'न कोऽप्यधिकारि भेदोऽत्र'

'na koapi adhikaaribheda'.

'There is no consideration of first being worthy of it.' There is no restriction of caste, creed of colour for getting admission to this shaiva order. This naturally must mean that it is the intelligent who can grasp this advanced philosophy, being the lastest development on all the others. For the fine intellects no restriction is imposed. But there are grades in Diksha-initiation. They are :-

1. Samayik—when the disciple is given the training of proper discipline.
2. Putrak—when spiritual knowledge is imparted to the disciple.
3. Acharya—when the disciple becomes Acharya (preceptor) and imparts knowledge to other disciples. and
4. Siddha—The perfect being.

(vide Tantraloka)3 (c)

v) Divine Grace is anugraha (अनुग्रह) in Vedanta and shaktipaata (शक्तिपात) in Kashmir Shaivism. Both the philosophies understand it to be unconditional. They are in complete agreement on this point. Vedanta says that intellectual power, study of the Vedas and even spiritual instruction are persuaded by divine grace alone :-

ईश्वरानुग्रहादेव पुंसामद्वैतवासना —अवधूत गीता १/१

'Ishwaraanugrahaadeva pumsaamadwaitavaasanaa' 9

'It is by Lord's grace that one is led to monistic practices.'

Again, the Upanishads declare :-

यमेवैष वृणते तेन तभ्य-
स्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणते तनुं स्वाम् ।। मुण्डक० उ० ३-२-३

'Yamevaisha vrinute tena labhyastasyaisha aatma vivranute tanum swaam' 10.

'Atma can be realized by him whom He favours and to whom He reveals Himself.'

In Shaivism also it is Shaktipaata (शक्तिपात) that makes self-recognition possible.

गले पादिकया नाथ ! नीयते सद्गुरुं प्रति ।

'gale paadikayaa naatha neeyate sadgurum prati'

'One is directed towards the preceptor as if tethered with a rope'

नात्र कोऽप्यात्मीयः पुरुषकारः

'naatra koapi Aatmeeyah Purushakarah'

'There is no human effort to earn shaktipaata'

It is the independent will of Lord Siva to grant shaktipaata or divine grace to any one at any place and at any time.

vi) Badarayana's viewpoint is the outcome of the various schools of thought of his day, as there existed Ashmarthya, Audulomi, Kaashakritsna and others who had held different views previously. His is the accepted classic of the Vedanta system to-day. It was endorsed and expanded by Gaudapada and Shankaracharya through Maandukya karikas and Prasthanatrayi respectively. Vidyaranya held the same view in his Panchadashi.

Likewise, we find that the polytheistic faith with greater inclination towards Shaivism developed into Kashmir Shaivism or Trika philosophy with the advent of Vasugupta and Somanandanatha. This peculiar philosophy developed in Kashmir and includes almost all the previous thoughts. It was further adored by Kallata, Utpalacharya and later by Abhinavaguptapada. Siva-Sutra, Sivadrishti, Spanda, Ishwara-pratyabhijnavimarshini need special mention in this context. Besides this, Abhinavagupta's Tantraloka and Paratrimshika Vritti form the encyclopaedia of Kashmir Shaivsm.

To sum up, if we study both these philosophies with interest and zeal, we shall find that both lay stress on the practical aspect, which is realization of the Self. Both enable all to realise the teachings during one's own lifetime. Their individual developments lead to the common goal—Realization of the Supreme Reality—where there is no experience of duality and hence no sorrow. It is the state of absolute bliss. It is the stateless state. The vedas declare :-

'एकं सत् विप्राः बहुधा वदन्ति

'Ekam sat viprah bahudah vadanti' —वेद

'Truth is one but the wise give it in many ways'.

Although Kashmir Shaivism can hardly be grasped until all the six systems of philosophy are comprehended, yet no such system of India will be complete without this. No doubt, Tantras suffered a great criticism from the western and eastern scholars, due to their esoteric or symbolic character. But thanks are due to Sir John woodroffe (Arther Avalon), who was the first to defend the outraged Tantras. In the foreword to his book entitled 'The Garland of Letters', Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan (professor Emeritus, Centre of Advanced study in philosophy, University of Madras) writes :-

"The decent Indian mind that had developed a deep-rooted prejudice against the Tantras became awake to their excellence after the pioneering work of this great foreigner."[11]

He made their meaning clear and helpful for understanding the culture of India. Therefore, it is imperative that this line of traditional literature should properly be understood. Then it will be convincing to the common man that Kashmir Shaivism gives the detailed analysis of the ultimate Reality, which Vedanta already explained on the basis of Saankhya Philosophy.

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LATER HINDU PERIOD OF KASHMIR HISTORY

(1148 A. D to 1339 A. D.)

The Doyen of Sanskrit chroniclers, Kashmirian Kalhana, was destined to write about the Hindu period of Kashmir History only upto A. D. 1148. Therafter, being inspired by overwhelming talent of his illustrious predecessor, Jona Raja pieced together the reign of subsequent Hindu Kings upto 1339 A. C. when the Sultans appeared on the Kashmir-scene. It was at the instance of celebrated Shirya Bhatta that Jona Raja took up the thread of chronicle writing with Jaya Singh's last seven years to the end of Kota Rani, the Hindu monarch of Kashmir and wove a panoramic picture of fourteen Hindu Kings in 307 verses. Thus the chronicle of later Hindu Kings of Kashmir did not suffer by default in any way, more or less was made complate and self contained by this versatile scholar.

Even though Jona Raja has confessed that Kalhana was his ideal, yet he has not been able to pin-point the sources on which he rebuilt the History of these Hindu kings. Kalhana, on the other hand, has most lucidly given as a lengthy inventory of sources which came in handy to him while delineating the History of ancient Hindu period of Kashmir. Unfortunately for Jona Raja, no such reference-material could be available to him, more so in the context of social and political turmoil which found a fertile soil during the reign of those later Hindu Kings. Perforce, he had to draw upon public-memory, tradition and other allied direct or indirect evidence and piece these together for giving it the shape of readable chronicle. Moreover, the selection of medium-Sanskrit also posed a veritable predicament to him. In his own words he has lamented the apathy of general public for Sanskrit and so has elected to caption his chronicle as "Raja Tarangini in the footsteps of Kalhana.,, He could correctly divine that this title borrowed for Kalhana would draw the elite towards it since the reputation of Kalhana as a master-mind in wedding History to poetry was irrifutable, an alibi for Kalhana through his own treatise.

Despite all these shortcomings, it goes without saying that Jona Raja has taken up his assignment in all seriousness and has not indulged in futile kite flying. He along with his successors in this field—Shrivara, Prajya Bhatta and Shuka—have kept their heads cool and have in no way got involved emotionally with the turn of events. The inauspicious atmosphere staring them in their face did not at all ruffle them and they have admirably enough maintained the highest traditions of chronicle writing; their counterparts in Persian have more than often lost their balance and in their misplaced zeal for Islam have mutilated the actual content and ethos of Sultan period of Kashmir History. They have presented most of these Sultans as rabid crusaders against the Hindu way of life, which does not stand the veracity of facts penned down by the contemporary Sanskrit chroniclers. These chroniclers having been reduced to a minority overnight as also treated like the under god (as narrated by Persian Historians), had every reason to deride this proselytising attitude of the Sultans, but instead have placed honour where it was due and have not also refrained from calling spade a spade. The very fact of engaging Sanskrit Scholars for writing the History of Sultan period gives a lie to what Persian Historians have termed as mass conversion under duris or general genocide of the Hindus at that time. Jona Raja takes Sultan Sikandar, in collusion with Suha Bhatta, to task for his inhumam treatment towards Hindus, though he was in the pay of his son Sultan Zainul-abdin Budshah. This kind of plain - speaking on the part of Jona Raja deserves kudos but at the same time acts as a telling reminder of the freedom of expression allowed so benignly by this benevolent Sultan. To crown all, Jona Raja has praised Sultan Shahab-ud-Din for his catholicity, yet Persian chroniclers have dubbed him as the worst kind of Hindu-baiter. Shrivara has recorded in his "Zaina Raja Tarangini" that a Buddhist monastery at Bijebehara and a rock Shrine of "Ganesha" at the foot of Hari Parbat in Srinagar were built at public level during the reign of Sultan Hassan, the grandson af Budshah, but at the same time he has said that the Shrine of 'Bahu Khatkeshwara' at the confluence of the Jhelum and Dhud-Ganga was razed to ground by hot headed Muslims, actually neo-converts. The very fact of converting Hindu Shrines into mosques preserving their sanctity in every respect speaks volumes for the forbearance exhibited consciously

or otherwise by the Muslim population of Kashmir. In recent years we have seen the sordid fate which such places of worship met during Russian Revolution or even after it, when we are told that the man of today is more rational than he was ever before.

At the same time, these chroniclers have suggested loudly—rather reading between their lines—that the Sultans of Kashmir always treated themselves as the big brother and never mixed with local Muslim population. They were so conscious of their blue-blood that they preferred to marry daughters or sisters of Rajas of Jammu, Rajouri etc. rather than have any such matrimonial relatians with Kashmiri Muslims. At best they brought Sayed girls to their harem who were obviously foreigners here and belonged to the highest echelon of Muslim heirarchy. But, when during the decline of Sultan rule, local factions began to assert themselves, the force of circumstance made them initiate such relations with the most powerful factions not for the love of it but to make themselves secure on the rickety throne.

In the background of such detached attitude to chronicle writing we can safely assert that Jona Raja has steered meticulously safe between enthralling emotion and nauseating exaggeration. Later Hindu period of Kashmir History is an eloquent testimony to this kind of highest norm observed by him most tenaciously. He has elected to sit on the fence and narrate the events as they take shape of their own accord. He never sits on judgement on these and leaves it to the reader to draw his own inferences. He had enough excuse to lament when the rule of Hindu Kashmir was slowely and steadily making way for an alien sovereignity, but instead has felt relieved to see the end of such incompetence and depravation which these Hindu kings represented in letter and spirit. This is a glowing tribute to his undaunted spirit unruffled by sentiment or religious loyalties.

Jona Raja has altogether given us a list of twelve Hindu Kings punctuating it with a brief interlude of "Renchan" and then proceeded with Udyan Deva and Kota Rani. The last seven years of Jaya Singh's rule (1148 A. D. to 1155 A. D.) were exhausted in obstructing muslim incursions into the state for which he also sought the help from neighbouring Hindu chieftains. He seems to be the last Hindu monarch worth his salt and laid down his life while defending his home land.

After him the reins of the Government passed on to his son 'Parmanuk' 1155 A. D. to 1164 A. D. through whose incompetence the vassals of Kishtwar, Rajouri and others on the outer fringe of Kashmir declared independence. He has been portrayed as an idiot with least credentials for becoming a king. Thereafter, 'Vanti Deva (1164 to 1171 A. D.) and 'Bopa Deva' (1171 A. D. to 1181 A. D.) ascended the throne one after another and the social and political conditions deteriorated in the country due to their being nincompoops They were followed by 'Jassaka' (1181 A D. to 1199 A. D.) given to levity and lust. However, his talented son Jagdeva (1199 A. D. to 1213 A. D) tried his best to stem the rot and halted the disintegration of the state. He erected a towering shrine of 'Harsheshwara' Lord Shiva at Razpur near Khonmuh. Unfortunately he was poisoned to death by the commander of the gate guards (passes leading into Kashmir) "Padma" by name.

His son Raja Deva (1213 A. D. to 1236) had fled to Kishtwar but was brought back by the enemies of the commander of gate-guards. the nobles of Khovurpora in the Liddar Valley. Later on 'Padma' was also done to death by some hunters. Raja Deva was acknowledged as the ruler by the entire Kashmiri population. He rehabilitated 'Lavanyas' ('lones' in Kashmiri) and made them his strong allies. But he could not arrest the erosion that had seeped down into the very fibre of Kashmiri society and was venquishad by the chieftain of 'Lar' 'Baladhyachandra' who grabbed half of the metropolis Srinagar from him and built a hospice 'Baladhymatha' (Kashmiri Baldimar) in his own name. The Brahmin-section of the p pulation did not take kindly to his weak-kneed policy, consequently revo ted but were brought to bay with an iron hand. They were persecuted so vehemently that they opted for changing their caste even. Jona Raja associates the abominable term 'Na Bhatto ham-' I am not a Bhatta' (Kashmiri Nabtu) with this Hindu King for the first time. He founded the two localities of Rajori (Kadal) within the city and Village (Razul) consecrating these with his own name.

Sangrama Deva (1236 A. D. to 1252 A. D.) his successor put in hard labour to reclaim the lost territories from neighbouring chieftains but his younger brother 'Surya' fell foul with him and indulged in conspiring against him though he had been given the respectable

authority as the chairman of the Council of ministers. Consequently a fight broke out between the brothers in which 'Surya' was taken prisonor and killed subsequently at the 'Hamal', the Governor of which locality 'Tunga' had sworn allegiance to him. During the absence of 'Sangrama Deva' the descendants of Kalhana had unleashed a reign of terror throughout the state and the king had to seek asylum with the ruler of Rajori. Thereafter "Damaras" also joined hands with the "Kalhanas" and sucked the blood of Kashmiris. Sangrama Deva returned to his state incognito, collected his forces and overwhelmed his enemies. He also gave reprieve to 'Kalhanas' for being Brahmins. He built a row of twenty-one barracks for the Brahmins and cows at Bijebehara. But the 'Kalhanas' nursed a grudge against the King and secretly conspired to get rid of him. Pandit 'Yashska' the poet, immortalized the King in his composition replete with poetic excellence. However, this treatise along with its title is not available to us to-day. We also are not informed about the medium used by this poet—Sanskrit or Kashmiri.

His son Rama Deva (1252 A. D. to 1273 A. D.) avenged the murder of his father by putting to sword all those who had colluded with each other to kill him. On the left bank of 'Ladar' stream he built a very imposing fort in his name. The Vishnu temple at Kakapora was rennovated by him which had earlier been desecrated mistakenly. He had no son of his own, hence adopted a Brahmin-boy 'Lakshma' by name. The queen 'Samudra' erected a hospice within the city naming it as 'Samudra Matha' - (Kashmiri 'Sodramar').

We are given to understand that a Brahmin boy, the adopted son of Rama Deva, Lakshma Deva occupied the throne (1273 A.D. to 1286 A.D.) but it proved to be a veritable crown of thorns, for him. Though being made 'Khshtrya' by his profession, he could not shake off his marrow-deep Brahmanical outlook. The Turk 'Kajjala' invaded Kashmir during his reign and Lakshma Deva was uprooted. His queen 'Ahalya' built a serai calling it as 'Ahalya Matha' (Kashmiri 'Ahalmar') within Srinagar.

'Sangram Chandra of 'Lar' in collusion with the Turk invader 'Kajjala' made Lakshma Deva's successor 'Sinha Deva' (1236 A. D. to

1301 A. D.) flee to the 'Ledar' Valley which comprised his nominal state now. When 'Sangrama Chandra' died, Sinha Deva entered the city and indulged in setting the house in order. The King was a devout Hindu, so constructed many shrines the prominent amongst these was the temple of 'half-lion, half-man' (Nara Simha) at Dhyanodar-the Karewa of Dhyneshwara' near Bandipore. He also honoured his guru Shankar Swami by allotting him the income accruing from ten shrines. The King was poet also, but none of his compositions has come down to us so far. However, he fell in bad company later on and had illegal relations with one courtesan 'Idagali' by name. The chief teller of Royal treasury 'Darya (Khan) by name got the King assassinated by 'Kama Samuha.'

This very 'Kama Samuha' was instrumental in installing Simha Deva's brother 'Suha Deva' (1301 A. D. to 1320 A. D.) on the throne.

During his reign a sizable number of fugitives came to Kashmir for seeking employment here. The king obliged them readily, least knowing that he was digging his own grave and working unconsciously for the dissolution of Hindu Kashmir. Along with these fugitives Shahmeer arrived in Kashmir in A. D. 1313 and the king Suha Deva allotted a Jagir to him making him comfortable in every way.

At that very time 'Dulcha' invaded Kashmir with his hordes spelling disaster. King Suha Deva, not having the nerve to confront him, tried to buy peace from him with a huge sum of money. For meeting that end he imposed exhorbitant taxes on his subjects already groaning under the terror of Dulcha not sparing the Brahmanas even who were immune from such levies. The ego of the Brahmanas was hurt to such an extent that many of these preferred self-immolation to paying of taxes. Even after getting a huge amount as gratification, Dulcha did not vacate Kashmir for long eight months. During this period Kashmiris suffered untold miseries, to borrow Jona Raja's words could not afford to come out of their hide-outs for being killed like rats out of fear for the cat. At last he went out of Kashmir through Pirpanchal negotiating 'Tarbal' pass towards the South of Divsar. Again Jona Raja would make us believe that a very small portion

of the population had survived this holocaust and that also could not find any food to eat." Kashmir had become desolated completely.

During this nemesis which visited Kashmir, 'Renchan' a run-away prince from Ladakh was in the Valley but was lying low for fear of Dulcha. He was perhaps biding his time to strike at the right moment. Propitiously for him Kashmir was in shambles, the people and their ruler demoralised, so he did not encounter any resistance in grabbing the throne. He had earlier subjugated 'Rama Chandra' the last chieftain of 'Lar' though perfidy. He managed infiltration into this stronghold of Chandra Dynasty in the disguise of cloth-sellers and was successful in murdering Rama Chandra and marrying 'Kota Devi' a scoin of his family. King Suhadeva went into hiding and Renchan (1320 A. D. to 1327 A. D,) had his bread buttered on both sides. Jona Raja uses the adjectival epithet 'Sultan' with his name hinting towards his conversion to Muslim faith, though he had beseeched one Deva Sawmi, a Shaivite, earlier to admit him into the Hindu fold. But on his being a 'Bhautta' the Swami did not oblige him. Renchan tried to consolidate his position with an iron hand and suppressed the 'Lones' who had become very powerful.

He founded 'Rinchenpur' (near Kashmiri Bulbul Lanker) whthin the capital surrounded by a moat (Kashmiri Mar) on all sides. At last he became a victim of a conspiracy hatched jointly by Tukka a compatriot of Rinchen and Udhyan Deva who had taken refuge in Gandhara. A fight ensued between these two factions. Rinchan receievd a fatal head injury and died. Earlier Rinchan had been very much pleased with the non-partisan attitude of Shahmeer who had not aligned himself with all such intrigues against the monarch; so had made over his son 'Haider' to him for upbringing.

Rinchan could have been safely termed as the first Sultan of Kashmir but after him Hindu rule again continued for sixteen years. He might at best be called the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir. It might well be termed as a rehearsal for induction of Sultan rule later.

After him Udyan Deva (1323 to 1339 A. D. settled himself on

the throne marrying 'Kota' the widow of Rinchan. Jona Raja has not cared to give exact credentials of Udyan Deva or his relations with King Suha Deva. The chronicler laments his rise to power as he lacked statesmanship and also nerve. He bestowed governorship of 'Kamraz' and other places on the sons of Shahmir—Jamshed and Ali respecttively. Actually the power was concentrated in the hands of Kota Rani the queen while the king would spend all his time in religious observances. Jona Raja has indulged in laughing in his sleves when he mentions that Udyan Deva had fastened bells around the neck of horses so that insects were not trampled over, as if these poor creatures would hear and comphehend such an advance warning.

The last nail in the coffin of later Hindu rule was the invasion of Achala who was tactfully prevailed upon to return after getting a good sum from Kota Rani. During this invasion instead of confronting Achala or negotiating peace with him on diplomatic level, king Udyan Deva like an irresponsible coward had fled to Ladakh throwing his wife to wolves. But 'Kota' stood this test well and called her husband back. She had a son from him named 'Jatta' who was made over to 'Bhaikshana' one of his ministers for being properly nursed.

During this confusion and anarchy with which the firmament of Kahmir was overcast, Shahmeer after making his position secure tried to fish in these troubled waters. He could very well divine that the Hindu empire was tottering under its own weight of incompetence; so to fill in this vacum his credentials were now the best. However, like an astute diplomat he stood his ground well and did not take a rash step. He had been made the chief of guards on duty at the mountain-passes. This position he exploited to his heart's content and manipulated infiltration into the valley on a large scale. Secondly, he unified the scattered muslim population within Kashmir and became their leader. Moreover, he coaxed the commissars of Bhangil, Beerwa, Hamal etc. into matrimanial alliances thus enlisted their support. He also would demoralize Kota Rani the virtual ruler at that time by reminding her that her son 'Haider' who was in this tetelage would inevitably suffer if she tried to thwart his plans. Kota Rani out of motherly affection for Haider could not take any action against Shahmeer. This resulted in making him stronger every day, sensing that the time was ripe for

striking, Shahmeer raised the banner of revolt and looted Shankarpur (Pattan) and set Bijebehara on fire and encamped on she 'Udars' (Karewas) of Chakdar. The Lones, Damaras and Bhauttas defectted to his side through his superb statesmanship and his garrison outnumbered the Royal army in men as well as material. king Udyan Deva died and now the decks were cleared for Shahmeer by Nature even.

Kota Rani after suppressing the news of the death of her husband for a couple of days went to Anderkot. While engaged in planning counter strategy she was beseiged by Shahmeer. Earlier Seahmeer had 'Bikshana' murdered on whose help Kota could very safely depend.

In this atmosphere of gloom and despair Shahmeer sent feelers to her to get married with him. Kota Rani in order to save the throne for her as also for guarrenteeing safety to 'Haider' acceded to the proposal of Shahmeer. She could not see through the game Shahmeer was initiating under the cover of this marriage-proposal. The seige was lifed, and Kota having become the spouse of Shahmeer only for one night, was in the morning handed over to assassins. Thus the later Hindu period of Kashmir History came to an ignonimus close and Shahmeer waiting in the wings had a cake-walk to the throne of Kashmir for ushering in Sultan rule.

After going through this brief detail, we cannot resist inferring that this epoch of Hindu kings of Kashmir had outlived itself for reasons obvious. Out of 16 Kings in this period five were killed through court intrigues. Four amongst them fled the country for not sizing upto the impending danger. Some amongst these Kings were so spineless as to share the capital Srinagar with rulers of Lar—compertively a very small principality. A fugitive from Ladakh Renchan could very safely entrench himself on the throne without a leaf in the valley. Only Kota Rani tried her best to resist the onslaughts made on this Hindu Kingdom but she was alone in undoing toe wrong that had permeated the entire of Kashmiri society then. She valiantly tried to fight against time and tide and in doing so had to pay the price of getting *killed*.

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